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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

London was bombed on Monday evening by part of an aeroplane force which attacked the South-East Coast, while later, on the same night, Zeppelins crossed the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire coasts. Londoners have never heard such incessant firing from anti-aircraft guns, but the raiders all escaped with impunity. On the next night there was a raid again, with the usual results. The papers of Tuesday contained, besides the meagre official reports of these ventures, a notice of the continuous and successful flight by an Italian airman, Captain Laureati, from Turin to Hounslow, 656 miles in 7 hours 20 minutes. A month ago Captain Laureati flew from Turin to Naples and back, 920 miles, without descending. These feats suggest once more the question: Why do we not retort by bombing German towns—Cologne, Magdeburg, Berlin, Frankfurt? The public is overwhelmingly for such reprisals, and means to have them. Official action regarding these raids has been lamentably behind public opinion, as the Government will find out pretty quickly, if it does not act instead of wavering and wobbling.

General Korniloff has turned out to be a poor creature, a mere Boulanger, whose courage failed him at the sticking point. Russia has now become a dissolving view of anarchy, and the question arises, what are the Entente Powers going to do about it? Have they any policy? The Japanese door is still open into Russia; and now that the United States are in the war, something might be done by the Entente Powers to save Russia from her revolutionary Socialists, who will inevitably, sooner or later, as the result of bribery or military defeat, hand her over to Germany. But then the Western Powers must devise a policy, and execute it quickly. They have failed to support the Government of the Tsar: shall it be written in history that they could not protect their darling democracy? Must Gaspadeen Kerenski be thrown to the lions, too?

It was hardly worth while to read the rigmarole of cant and lies which the German Emperor addressed to the Pope by way of answer to his eirenicon. It is certainly not worth while to analyse its clap-trap about peace, arbitration, and the freedom of the seas, except to observe that the last phrase can only mean freedom to sink at sight the ships of all nations. We fancy we can see the leer of cynicism with which the Kaiser, the Chancellor, and Hindenburg concocted this piece of mock deference to His Holiness. What do they care about the Pope? He has no troops, or ships, or trade to give away or withhold. The only Power that could have intervened effectively as mediator was the United States; and perhaps the King of Spain is the only possible peacemaker left.

The contrast between the speeches of Admiral von Tirpitz in Berlin and of Mr. Asquith at Leeds is instructive. Admiral von Tirpitz declared, amid the frantic cheers of a huge audience in the capital of the German Empire, that Belgium had suffered no more than her due; that right, not wrong, had been done to her; that she must be placed under a German protectorate; and that sinking at sight was a lawful means of warfare. Mr. Asquith repeated the now familiar points, evacuation by Germany of all occupied territories, full independence for Belgium with indemnity, recognition of the independence of Poland and the overdue claims of Italy, Rumania and Serbia, whilst, rather vaguely, he included in the list of peoples with "claims" Greece and the Southern Slavs. Why Greece, which has behaved with perfidy, cowardice, and ingratitude towards Serbia and the Entente, should share in the "melon-cutting" is not apparent.

But taking Mr. Asquith and Admiral von Tirpitz as representative men (as they are), what chance of agreement is there between them? They are at the North and South poles of mentality. Admiral Tirpitz, who is no outsider, no fire-eating professor or State-directed editor, deliberately justifies everything that has been done in Belgium and Northern France, plumps for annexation and indemnities, and defends U-boat piracy

as legal. The distinction between Prussian militarism and the German people, on which Entente statesmen harp to tediousness, strike us as quite futile. The German confederacy, a bundle of states and principalities, is quite content with Prussian militarism—nay, glories in it. Nothing will bring peace within debateable distance but the driving of the German troops out of Belgium and France, and for that it looks as if we should have to wait until next spring.

We trust that Admiral Jellicoe is satisfied with the Kaiser's testimony to his character. According to that competent judge, "Admiral Jellicoe is a gentleman . . . a nobleman, a sailor over whose lips no lie will pass." In the matter of lying, as well as of nobility, no one can deny that the Kaiser is a critic of the first water. But, then, the foundation of this eulogy appears to be that Admiral Jellicoe "in accordance with the truth reported his crushing losses in the Battle of Jutland." The "crushing losses" are a matter of opinion; but Admiral Jellicoe did report the facts. This fills the Kaiser with an ecstasy of astonishment. What! An Admiral report the truth! There are some animals of whom Pope said:—

"It is the slaver kills and not the bite."

M. Painlevé is perhaps at the present moment the most powerful and independent personality in French politics. He is a Radical Socialist, but has shown on occasions a good deal of independence in many directions. It was he who was mainly responsible for the selection of General Pétain as Commander-in-Chief and General Foch as Chief of the Staff, two admirable appointments on which he cannot be too heartily congratulated, and which are largely responsible for the restoration of the moral in the French Army. The French private now knows that he is in safe hands, that his leaders will stand no nonsense from the politicians, and that no attempt will be made at an offensive unless the proper moment has arrived and the ground properly prepared beforehand. A visitor to Headquarters Staffs is impressed by the admirable spirit that now prevails—no parade, no swagger, but a thorough business-like atmosphere that shows that some of the best soldiers in the world are now admirably led, better even, perhaps, than they were in the days of General Joffre, though he deserves immense credit for having made the French Army the admirable machine it is.

He has had a difficult job to face. For forty-eight hours the fate of this new Ministry hung in the balance. His original idea—a splendid one—of constituting a genuine Ministry of National Defence came to naught largely owing to the intrigues of the Caillaux group and the opposition of the Socialists. They objected to M. Ribot's retention in the Government, and the Caillaux party wanted the continuation of the Malvy regime by the surrender of the Ministry of the Interior to M. Renoult, who would thus have full command of that political machine which appoints and discusses Government officials. M. Painlevé was, however, determined on having his way, and the new Government has been constituted.

Of the making of many parties there is no end. The "National" party was only just in time to get in first, as at least three other parties were on the point of being launched. These are: 1. The League of Nations party, headed by Messrs. Asquith and Runciman, and backed by the Abingdon Street Gang. The object of this party is believed to be peace by negotiation. 2. The Imperial National Party, headed by Mr. Walter Long, and backed by the Canadian Gang, whose objects are vaguely understood to be the obliteration of the old parties, and the establishment of a new one, with "Furth Fortune and Fill the Fetters," the

war-cry of the Murray Clan, as its policy. 3. The Party of the Future, headed by Messrs. Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, and Sir F. E. Smith, and backed by all the world (this is a great secret). Its policy is said to be that of "the open port at the Other Club," and is, therefore, hostile to the Tariff Reform League.

We hope that when Parliament meets, Mr. Nield, K.C., M.P., will find out who it was at the Admiralty that instructed the military representative at the Middlesex Appeal Tribunal to "savage" a poor boy named Miller, employed in the Ministry of Blockade, on the ground that he was a German. Miller was born in this country, of a German father, whether naturalised or not the youth did not know, as he had been dead eleven years. Miller has never been in Germany, and knows no one there, nor a word of the language. Before the war he took the name of his mother, a Devonshire woman. Yet the Admiralty thought it worth while to send down a Captain Carter to inquire into the case publicly, thus doing a harmless young man, employed as a clerk, an injury which may hamper him for years.

Mr. Nield, K.C., M.P., showed great kindness and commonsense in dealing with the case, as did Lord Enfield. But it ought not to be allowed to rest here. The conduct of the Admiralty was very much the same in the case of the Captain in the Mercantile Marine, born in Scotland, whom they tried to deprive of his certificate because his name was German. If British-born subjects are to be subject to this kind of witch-hunting, why don't the Admiralty begin at the top of the tree? Has the Admiralty official, who instructed Captain Carter, forgotten that until the other day Prince Louis of Battenberg, whose new title we do not remember, was a Lord High Admiral? Is he prepared to challenge the qualifications for public employment of all the members of the Battenberg and Teck families? Is he ready to demand the removal from the public service of Sir Alfred Mond, Lord Milner, Sir Edward Goschen, Sir Maurice de Bunsen, and Sir Eyre Crowe? We are sure he is not: but he sends down a pert Captain to try and ruin a young clerk who is without powerful or rich friends.

In a volume of Political Portraits a hundred years old we came across this quaint sentence: "As the character of the British gentleman bears a near resemblance to that of the nobleman, so that of the man of business is much blended with that of the gentleman; inasmuch that in the same person the gentleman and the man of business are very frequently found combined." We hope that this is so, as the man of business has been torn from his office and rushed into the highest posts without any training in what is the most difficult of all kinds of business, the government of men. What with the Geddes family, Mr. Sam Lever, Sir Albert Stanley, Lord Devonport, Lord Rhondda, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, Lord Cowdray, and others too numerous to mention, no one can say that the business man is not having a fair trial in politics. Has he been such a shining success? We hope that the First Lord of the Admiralty had nothing to do with the savaging of young Miller, or we shall begin to doubt about the gentleman.

The resumption of the British offensive in Flanders, and more especially the character of the new tactics employed by our Northern armies, have given point to the much-debated remark by General Smuts that "we had won the war." Rightly interpreted, this means that not only is Hindenburg henceforth incapable of a strategical offensive in the West, owing to Germany's reduced man and gun power, but also that there is no enemy system of defence, however perfect or intricate, that could prevail for any length of time

against our established tactical ascendancy in all arms, not to mention the immense reserves, both human and material, at the disposal of three of the Allies, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States.

Gough's latest pushes astride the Ypres-Menin and the Ypres-Roulers highways would certainly seem to vindicate the Boer statesman's proposition. The advance on 20 September attained, it is true, to no greater depth than little over a mile on an eight-mile front, although launched, if we are to believe Berlin, with no fewer than nine infantry divisions. But progress was uniform on the whole length of the attack, and practically all the objectives assigned were reached within a few hours from "going over." In this respect the British success may be said to have rivalled that of the French before Verdun. It afforded a veritable model of the limited thrust.

But, in other ways, its significance exceeds that of Pétain's brilliant series of victories gained on the Meuse. Here our Allies were still dealing, more or less, with the traditional methods of the entrenched and rigid defence; whereas the problem confronting our own men was of a wholly different character. For some months past, the German General Staff, in view of the crushing defeats inflicted upon them last year on the Somme, had despaired of arresting the forward movement of the Allies north of the Oise by sheer weight of cannon, men, and concrete, and, inspired by Ludendorff, had devised the so-called "elastic" defensive for the purpose of indefinitely retarding the Allied advance, and this at a relatively slight cost.

The new method, first used during the retreat from the Ancre, and perfected during that on the Scarpe, when it admittedly baffled two of our finest Army leaders, Allenby and Gough, had attained its full development by 31 July and 16 August, when our storming columns, after the initial success, were each time held up at various points by the now notorious "pill-boxes." To counter the defence in depth, new offensive tactics had to be devised by our High Command and Staff, and the fact that, whether as regards our gunners or our riflemen, they have proved so completely successful within five weeks of our former check reflects great credit on all concerned. The depth of the advance is now more restricted than of yore, but push can be made to succeed push at intervals of from four to five days. That is the outstanding feature of the present fighting.

The Germans have practically doubled their holdings on the Dvina front. With Jacobstadt in German hands, Dvinsk and Reshitz Junction are in serious danger, especially when the extraordinary disproportion of Russian prisoners to their captured guns (400 to 50) is considered—a sad token of Russian moral. True the forces at Schmettow's disposal are relatively slender, but the very choice of this dashing cavalry leader to command German forces on the Petrograd road is ominous. Schmettow conducted the famous cavalry raid at Molodechno, during Russky's retreat from Vilna, and, at a later stage, the grand cavalry manoeuvre in the Wallachian plain. At Molodechno he was foiled by Russky. But to-day, Russky has received his *congé* from the Soviet!

It is little or no use for the Food Controller or his deputy to fix prices if the only result of a reduction of price is increased consumption. The truth is that the workers, who are making enormous wages in munition factories and in other trades ancillary to the war, are leading lives of riotous luxury. Most of their fantastic earnings are spent on eating and on cheap jewellery and clothes. How are these people to be stopped from gormandising? The Jews, in parti-

cular, who in times of intermediate profits always reap a golden harvest, are making themselves very unpopular by their loud and ostentatious expenditure. Swarms of East-End Jews travel down every evening to sleep at Brighton and come up the next morning, as they are frightened by air-raids. If these new-rich are not careful, Jew-hating leading to Jew-baiting may spring up.

A Select Committee of the House of Commons has been appointed to examine the expenditure which is being defrayed by monies provided by Parliament, and to report what, if any, economies consistent with the policy decided by the Government may be effected therein. This Committee has, we understand, appointed six Sub-Committees to assist in its investigations. Mr. J. A. R. Marriott, M.P. for the City of Oxford, has also written a magazine article on the same subject. No more important question could engage attention, for the reckless and growing extravagance of Government, and the unceasing multiplication of highly paid officials to supervise every corner of our public and private lives, are piling up debts of mountainous height.

Gradually, step by step, under cover of the war, the House of Commons has been deprived of all control over expenditure. The Public Accounts Committee, and the Comptroller and Auditor-General, can only check accounts that are a year old: they act as auditors; that is to say, they detect actual fraud or wrongful conversion or corruption, but they have no more power over the expenditure than the auditors of a joint stock company have over the policy of the directors. In Committee of Supply or of Ways and Means members of Parliament make speeches attacking members of the Government, but the reduction of the vote is not meant except as a peg on which to hang a speech. Mr. J. A. R. Marriott advocates the appointment of a Committee whose duty it shall be to examine the financial aspect of every Bill involving the expenditure of public money, and which shall have the power to examine Ministers.

This strikes us as being rather an innocent proposal. What would the Minister care for such a Committee? Imagine Mr. H. A. L. Fisher being examined by such a Committee on his Education Bill, and being asked whether he did not consider an expenditure of forty millions a year unjustifiable during such a war as this! Or imagine the Prime Minister being asked how he could defend a housing scheme involving a cost of some three hundred millions! The Minister would smile blandly, and would reply, "All that you say, gentlemen, about economy, is quite true: but the House of Commons has passed my Bill, and if you object to the necessary expenditure, your remedy is to oppose the Bill on third reading. Really, I must refer you to the House, as I cannot argue the matter over again, nor can I consent to such reductions as would render the measure inoperative."

Finance depends on policy, and no Committee can curb the extravagance of Governments, who find it popular with the masses to spend money which they extract by levies on the unfortunate income-tax payers, who are less than a twentieth part of the population. Nothing will ever stop the extravagance of Governments except public opinion, which will only be awakened to the necessity of economy by some financial catastrophe, such as the disappearance of the capital necessary to finance industry, or some kind of national bankruptcy. Future political parties are already beginning to shape themselves with something like definiteness. There will be the Socialist-Syndicalist party, who will try to seize all industries and the capital necessary to work them: and there will be the

party of those who object to have their capital and their business seized. It will be a long and tough struggle.

The emotion of surprise can no longer be excited by anything the German Government may be discovered to have done, for apparently there are no depths of blackguardism and stupidity to which it has not sunk. Following on the discovery of Count Luxemburg's performance in Buenos Aires come the revelations of Mr. Lansing. Count Bernstorff, the German Ambassador at Washington, is now known, from the evidence of his own documents seized by the American Government, to have spent large sums in bribing agents to commit murder, and treason, such as placing bombs disguised as coal in the bunkers of passenger ships and cargo vessels, and in inducing workmen to desert from munition factories. In particular, this delectable Ambassador asked for £10,000 to influence Congress, "as before." This will settle Germany's hash with the Americans for at least a generation.

A striking fact is that nearly all the spies and traitors bribed by Count Bernstorff bear English or American names. These discoveries do not surprise us, but they suggest the following query. How can any country after the war receive Ambassadors from Germany or Austria? Count Bernstorff is a typical German aristocrat, one of the oldest and best of the diplomatic families. If a German nobleman can do what he has done in the United States, and what more than probably Baron Kuhlmann did in London, there simply cannot be a German Embassy in London or in Paris or in Washington after the war. A Consulate there must be for the transaction of necessary business between countries; but a Consul-General will probably take the place of an Ambassador. Why does the Government not sell the house in Carlton House Terrace as a sign of their determination not to receive an Ambassador?

Whatever we may think of Bismarck's "blood and iron policy," or the telegram reduced from 200 words to 20 which provoked France to war, there is no doubt that the Prince was genuinely desirous of keeping friends with England. He invited Sir Charles Dilke to visit him at Friedrichsruh in 1889, and made him partake of a Gargantuan banquet. "Of wines and beer they drink at dinner (records Dilke), a most extraordinary mixture, but as the wine is all the gift of Emperors and merchant princes it is good. The cellar card was handed to the Prince with the fish, and after consultation with me and with Hatzfeldt—we started on sweet champagne, not suggested by me, followed by Bordeaux, followed by still Mosel, followed by Johannesburg (which I did suggest), followed by black beer, followed by corn brandy. . . . When the Chancellor got to his row of great pipes, standing against the wall ready stuffed for him, we went back to black beer."

One can understand that people with stomachs of such capacity are like Habakkuk, "capable de tout." Bismarck told Dilke a story of a visit to London in the 'forties which shows that the cabby of those days was no more agreeable than the taxi-driver of to-day. The cabman tried to cheat Bismarck, who held out all his money in his hand; and said, "Pay yourself." The cabby took his right fare, less than he had demanded, but added with every sign of scorn, "What I say is, God damn all Frenchmen!" In an hour of confidence, probably at the black-beer stage, Bismarck said, "People look on me as a Monarchist. Were it all to come over again, I would be republican and democrat; the rule of kings is the rule of women; the bad women are bad, the good are worse." But then he hated the Empress Augusta, and the Crown Princess, as the devil hates holy water. It is said that the Tsar is ruled by his wife; the Kaiser certainly is not.

HOUSE OF LORDS.—III.

THE trouble about the House of Lords is that the peers don't believe in themselves. No men who believed in themselves would have accepted the cowardly resolutions of Lord Rosebery—that "soft-nosed torpedo," as Mr. Lloyd George called him—and of Lord Lansdowne, by which the peers gravely placed it on record that they were unworthy of the trust which the Constitution had reposed in them for over six centuries. Mr. Asquith's threat of creating 500 peers was bluff. The Liberal peers, most of whom have been created in the last three reigns, would themselves have stayed Mr. Asquith's hands, for they had no wish to see their costly coronets cheapened by the injection of Lord Salisbury's "500 sweeps." But the nerves of the peers were "rattled" by the failure of their Budget coup, and by the Limehouse orations. The war has brought the aristocracy to the front once more; and let us hope they will envisage the constitutional position with more calmness and courage than in 1911.

For if we are to retain any remnants of personal liberty, or any fragments of our property, it is essential that the House of Lords should recover their power of forcing the Government to appeal to the people on issues of special gravity, such as the Monarchy, the creation of provincial parliaments, and the rights of ownership. There is another power, in view of constitutional practice it may be called a new power, which should be given to the House of Lords, that of amending Money Bills. The House of Lords contains all the most eminent financiers and leading business men in the country, as the following list of peers shows—Lords Faringdon, Inchcape, Cowdray, St. Davids, Rhondda, Devonport, Leverhulme, Cunliffe, Swaythling, Faber, Pirrie, Iveagh, Revelstoke. There are, of course, eminent financiers and manufacturers not included in this list, but not very many, and these peers will be found to represent banking, shipping, brewing, finance, and other industries. Is it not absurd to say that a House which absorbs all our leading men of business shall be incompetent to propose amendments to a Money Bill? We do not suggest that the Lords should be given the power of insisting on their amendments, for that would transfer the power of the purse from the Commons. But if the House of Lords proposed sound and useful amendments to Money Bills, the House of Commons would be obliged to discuss them, and no Government would be mad enough to reject them simply because they came from the Upper House. In view of the wild financial schemes which are likely to come from the House of Commons in the near future, it is very important that the nation should have the benefit of the cool and expert advice of the financiers in the House of Lords.

As to the *personnel* of the House of Lords, why alter it? It is admittedly the strongest, most honest, and most dignified Second Chamber in the world. Let its assailants produce a better from any country. No comparison is possible with the Senate of the United States, for the American Government is not responsible to the Legislature, and no action by the Senate affects the President's Cabinet, except indirectly or sentimentally. The Senate in France is elected by the local authorities, as it has been suggested that the House of Lords should be elected by County Councils. Ask any educated Frenchman privately what he thinks of his Senate, and he will tell you that it is *bloccard*, i.e., divided into groups, and a negligible factor in the national life. The Italian Senate is the creature of Crown nomination, and is contemptible. What the Socialists and the Trade Unionists want is a Senator to whom they can say: "Come here: we pay you so much a year: we elected you to pass a six-hours Bill: do that, and hold your tongue." But that is exactly the kind of Senator which the nation, for its own protection, does not want. The House of Lords, with the exception of a

handful of high-brows and millionaires, is composed of country gentlemen, who have lived on their lands for many generations, and who approach politics, as Lord Salisbury said, in "a spirit of good-humoured indifference." Are they not better than the professional politicians? Their social position is assured: most of them have ample means; they have no axes to grind. When Lord Chancellor Thurlow, who was alleged to be the son of a carrier, was reproached with his origin by a vulgar peer, he replied, "I owe my position to my ability; the noble earl owes his to the accident of an accident." That was an admirable repartee, but, like most epigrams, it will not bear scientific analysis. Lord Thurlow was as much the accident of an accident as the vulgar peer. But whereas a peer is the accident of one accident, an elected member or Senator is the accident of ten thousand accidents. Does any sane person suppose that a man is made wiser or honester by the casting of ten thousand votes in his favour during the hurly-burly of an election? It is not even the choice of the electors, but that of the Caucus or organisation which runs the election. The accident of birth is less dangerous, in the long run, and on the whole, than the accidents of elections, or the sinister selections of a Caucus. If it comes to right (not legal but moral), have not the Cavendishes, the Russells, the Stanleys, the Cecils, at least as good a right to share in the government of Britain as the Isaacs, the Mondes, and the Samuels, who now crowd the avenues to preferment?

It is a delusion to suppose that the hostility of the Radicals will be disarmed by the substitution of a patchwork Senate of nominees and officials for the House of Lords. It is not the pedigrees but the politics of the Lords that the Socialists dislike; and they will denounce any Second Chamber that opposes their plans of plunder. The judges are not hereditary: but at the time of the Taff Vale decision the Lords of Appeal were attacked by the Trade Unionists as "old fossils." It is one of the few profound observations to be found in Macaulay's History that adherence to the forms of the Constitution in revolutionary times is the best safeguard for a nation. The fervour of revolutions passes: but so long as the forms of the Constitution remain, a recurrence to sane and wholesome practice is always possible. An institution like the House of Lords, if once destroyed, can never be restored. All nations envy Great Britain its House of Lords. If we are insane enough to destroy it, let the deed be done in the daylight by the nation. Let us not suffer it to be smothered by a professor's pillow, while the drums of war are bidden to drown its expiring cries.

POLITICIANS AND SOCIALISTS.

THE difficulties encountered by M. Ribot in his vain search after an effective Ministry are typical of the prevalent political anarchies—their "confused explanations and explained confusions." Everywhere—save to the same extent in Germany—politicians block union, and the Socialists, a handful that can yet colour all shades of opinion and even paralyse the body politic, are the worst offenders. In Russia the Soviet no more represents the nation than the Union of Democratic Control does Great Britain, yet these talkative theorists and mongrel internationalists have plunged her in anarchy and still demand posts of honour. In France the Socialists, who form only one-sixth of the Chamber, have thwarted M. Ribot, and tried to thwart their patriotic associate M. Painlevé. Their organised weakness simulates a strength which grasps at power, and professional politicians abet them. What is this but to put nationalism (instead of Socialism) on its trial, and make its judges those who think they can be nationalists one moment and internationalists the next, with a

complete disregard of public spirit. The results are obvious. Straightway "Labour"—which is naturally not the labourer—brandishes a blackmailing fist with shouts usually ignorant and frequently insincere. And so we get a vicious circle of strikes and surrenders to them by the very profiteering practitioners who have made them possible. What is needed is quite another sort of strike—a strike of the politicians themselves. If this ever came to pass, the Allied armies would breathe a sigh of relief. Perhaps it may when the salaries are cut down. O, these politicians!

They do not recognise this. They live in a puny heaven of their own, and are quite self-satisfied. The War indeed has proved a veritable godsend to them. It prevents them from being found out, and it helps them to wriggle in. It is "unpatriotic" to doubt them, yet they dare to dabble in strategy, and always fix one eye at least on the politics which they disclaim. It is our own fault that we have not sufficiently discriminated between politicians and statesmen, nor do we bear in mind that it was "pacifist" "democrats" with scant knowledge of Europe and less of human nature, who called on themselves to wage a gigantic war.

What is the distinction? The Politician is a retail trader in the cheap fashions of the hour. He has public wares to sell over his private counter with flatteries (which he styles "Democracy") to advertise them, and his eye fastens instinctively on the highest bidder. He is not concerned with the sources of his trade. For him the shop outweighs the factory, the factory the plantation, the plantation the ship and its compass, the ship the eternal elements. For all his windy phrases and parrot-like iterations, the "next article" is his creed—and he has more than thirty-nine of them, you may be sure. He shares, too, at heart the root-fallacy of the old Utilitarians, believing in "Everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost"—or, "take the foremost" if, as so often, he is a Socialist. The Utilitarians dignified this outlook by "the greatest good of the greatest number"—and the Socialists abuse them. The Politician new style dignifies his own outlook by "the greatest number of the greatest goods," "number" of course meaning the number of votes. As for the momentary happiness which he promises, it is to be coddled by the "State" at the expense of a limited class, which by a strange irony is called the "State" also. He has therefore to make out that it is the duty of a small painstaking section to be sucked dry, and the "right" of the rest to perform that office, with his own highly-paid assistance. That is why the modern dealer in "democracy" masquerades as a sentimentalist, for sentimentalism is the exploitation of feeling. That is why he recoils from facts which are the language of nature. That is why he settles nothing, and unsettles most things. He has to play the travelling cheap-jack who cures every one anyhow. Sentimentalism, "idealism" are the puffs on his painted booth. When newspapers turn him into an angel, they quite omit that this angel carries and blows his own trumpet—and that the Socialists are singeing his wings.

The Statesman, on the other hand, is a man versed in the big world as it exists, with the single aim of advantaging the national interests and honour. He is the slave of no faction, nobody's pawn or puppet. He looks far ahead and anticipates chances or combinations, and he never drifts on the surface of currents. He stands steadfast. The ignoble nobility of the friends of all mankind is alien not only to his head but to his heart. He despises the cruel kindness and dry soft-sawder of philanthropists who cause the evils that they profess to remedy. Nor will he ever pretend to stop storms by patches of brown paper on broken windows. He governs by guiding the sense and sensibility of his countrymen, and enlisting them in the cause of things far higher than the insects that crawl around them. He has vision and imagination and will, and so he compels the assent of history.

There is another vital distinction too often ne-

glected. Socialism is overlaying "democracy," but they are by no means identical. Real Democracy ought to aim at equal opportunities for all. Socialism aims at a State-almshouse which denies them to any. It would be a disaster for true freedom if a conspiracy of Socialists should ever temporarily succeed. At the best Socialists are dialecticians, not men of action, yet the tentative of the Stockholm Conference, connived at by politicians, was a mild push for supremacy. And our own Premier is unfortunate in having associated himself with the Soviet delegates and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. In heaven's name let all our politicians speak out and declare themselves. Are they Socialists or not? Do they only flirt with Socialism or do they mean marriage?

We need hardly press the moral home. But there is one element in our midst which is lacking anywhere else, and it is called the Nonconformist conscience. Politicised Nonconformity is a thing which puzzles the Continent, and yet its habitual wrongheadedness hastened the war—and has muddled it ever since. Its unctuous blend of class-envy, puritan persecution, and a stupidity proved by events, the smug self-righteousness with which it hugs its virtue, the platitudes on which it harps, the cheerful Sunday-afternoon rhetoric with which it illustrates its magic-lantern slides—all this, like the sort of peace which it often pictures, passes understanding. The Socialists are capturing the rough freethinkers through the Trade Unions, they are capturing part of the upper-class through patrician democrats, and now through the ghosts of Radicalism they are capturing some of the middle-class Chapel-goers. Like the Jesuits, though without their charm, Socialism—an influence more than a system—is all things to all men so long as it can leaven the lump by a "peaceful penetration." They promise each everything, the kingdom of earth or the kingdom of heaven—what does it matter? Many of them are sincere and believe in perfect governments with perfect pooling arrangements. But still more are indifferentists who use every means for their end—which is the partition of property. This will not happen in France when there is a large peasant proprietary to counterbalance the town rebels. But here with governments to abet and "guarantees" to forward the movement, it might happen, although on the security of property—not on its preponderance either in classes or corporations—civilisation depends. Our Socialists look down from Fabian pinnacles or Trade Union bastions as Blücher looked down from the dome of St. Paul's exclaiming "What plunder!" And then they look on Dr. Clifford and company and exclaim in another tone "What Allies!" "We are not Christians," they seem to say, "but we welcome this kind of Christianity. We know that Christ when he sent away the rich young man sorrowful, never ordered him to be stripped and cudgelled first. We know, too, that never did He enjoin public fasting—nor do we mean ever to fast at all till we bankrupt communities, but we rejoice in the leaveners of such doctrines for they set class against class and we thrive by division. We like to hear all this called the "Liberal Party," or "The Democracy," or the "Party of Progress"—or of anything in short which can persuade gulls to let us prey without risk. Let us prey, the very sound of it socialises the Chapel and hallows the Memorial Hall. As for a perfect government, ours will do as well or ill as another, and ours is a system of coterie-worship that your strong man will find it hard indeed to sever. It needs a scimitar to cleave satin."

Do not let us be misunderstood. The Nonconformist reaction in the Eighteenth Century did a great work—though by the same token John Wesley never actually broke with the Church. In alliance with them the selfish Whig Party did a great work in achieving religious toleration. The early Trade Unions did a great work in elevating labour and infusing it with energetic self-respect. But their suc-

cessors are fast undoing the work of these founders, and puritanism *per se* has usually been a blind leader of the blind. Into what ditch is it now leading us—this triple alliance between Socialism, Puritanism, Trade Unionism? "Not this Man but Barabbas" was the cry of a mob-plebiscite played on by the politics of the robe and the pulpit—that officialism which our new Democrat at once demands and execrates. The Scribes and Pharisees were well pleased with the day's adventure. But Jerusalem fell.

ENGLAND AND THE HANSA.

THERE was recently a little controversy, more or less political, upon—of all subjects—the Hanseatic League. It was alleged, upon the one hand, that throughout the Middle Ages this League dominated our foreign trade and even our national policy, and that our history was shaped in a great degree by its influence. It was further asserted that the League was German, and that upon its policy and methods the modern German system of national trade is largely founded. On the other hand, it was denied that the League was either German or had any hand in English history. Now this controversy was totally and justly ignored by our historians, for the sufficient reason that it had been raised by a writer unknown either to Oxford or Cambridge, and that, moreover, it dragged down the lofty study of history to the separate and more sordid sphere of economics, and even politics. For if the history of the Middle Ages, like the higher mathematics, was found to have any practical bearing upon life, it would lose all interest to those who profess it, and it is therefore safer to assume that the Mediæval Englishman was a thing apart, with no interest in trade, but wholly concerned in the defence of Magna Charta.

Yet to those who take a merely human interest in our English life and history, the issues raised must seem worth considering. Either the history is true or false: if it be true, then our mediæval story becomes modern and comprehensible to the average business Englishman of the present day; but, if it be false, then a whole series of events remain merely barbarous and inexplicable to rational men.

There are certain facts which make a foundation since they cannot be disputed. The Hanseatic League had an establishment in London, which was called popularly the "Steelyard," or officially, "Guildhalla Teutonicorum," or the Guildhall of the "Almains," Norman-French for Allemands or Germans. These Almains were incorporated merchants of an association of cities who claimed the protection of the Holy Roman Empire. The list of cities is set forth in at least one State document known to us, and is substantially German in the modern sense of the word—all chief names being Lübeck, Bremen, Hamburg, Danzig, Brunswick, and Cologne. An examination of the various lists given in the German authorities shows no important variation; so we may take it that the League had a national or racial basis, and was composed of the merchants of Western German cities interested in foreign trade. This League had certain *kontor* cities, that is to say cities which were not members, but customers or depots, where the League had counters or establishments. Novgorod was one, Bergen another, Bruges a third, and London a fourth. These *kontor* cities had no rights in the League, but were simply convenient centres of trade exploitation. The League had an organised settlement and certain important rights or concessions in each of these cities, and its policy was to secure and maintain a monopoly of their trade.

What the League's privileges were in London is set forth in many Charters and State documents, which may be consulted in a source no more recondite than Rymer's 'Fœdera,' or Adam Anderson's 'Origin of Commerce.' It had a preference in the Customs,

very substantial over all other foreigners, and considerable even over natives. It had the keeping of one of the gates of the city. It had freehold in the Steelyard, certain rights of storage, retail trade, and immunities from local dues, taxes, supervision, and the authority of our Courts of Justice and Admiralty Courts.

Now, these privileges, which are not in dispute, are so unusual and enormous that they lead inevitably to important deductions. It is obvious that they could not have been obtained without very considerable pressure or influence of some sort, nor could they have been maintained without arousing fierce resentment and opposition. No London merchant could have willingly assented to the proposition that a foreigner should enjoy trading rights and privileges greater than his own; no citizen could look with complacency on a foreign armed guard in one of its gate-houses. Yet this extraordinary phenomenon of our mediæval life seems never to have troubled our orthodox historians in the least. They were recorded in some cases but never explained. Yet the explanation must be remarkable and important, whatever it may be.

A foreign Power might acquire such rights only by force, or interest, or corruption, and maintain them only by the same means. So much must be obvious to anyone not altogether innocent of the business of humanity. But this supposition is not mere theory: it is supported by the German historians, as well as by our own chroniclers and State documents. The Germans claim that the Hanseatic League dominated English trade and influenced English policy, and one of their greatest scholars devoted a book to the study of German influence on our Wars of the Roses, one of his conclusions being that the Hanseatic League replaced Edward IV upon his throne in order to re-establish the privileges which had been abolished by Warwick the King-maker. This explanation, involving the flight to Flanders, the landing at Ravenspur, and the battle of Barnet, is at least well supported by contemporary State documents and English and German chronicles.

Coming to a later date, it is certain that the Steelyard was assaulted by a London mob in the reign of Henry VII, and that the Germans were suspected of complicity in the attempts of Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck. It is also certain that the privileges of the League were abolished in the reign of Edward VI, and partially restored in the reign of Queen Mary; that they were finally abolished by Queen Elizabeth, and the Hanseatics expelled from their Steelyard in 1598. All these are clear clues of some importance to English history, and it must be considered as remarkable that they have been neglected by our modern historians.

But the expulsion from the Steelyard was an act of retaliation which followed upon an Imperial bull against English merchants in Germany, and these English merchants are specifically described in the edict as the Merchant Adventurers of England. We are, therefore, faced by the fact that the Hanseatic League was engaged in a conflict with an English organisation, which must also have been of national importance. There is evidence that the Merchant Adventurers were, in fact, a national organisation of the English cloth trade formed at once in rivalry and in imitation of the Hanseatic League, and that the struggle between these two organisations is one of the master-keys to English history through a long period of time.

The economic foundation of the problem would seem to be that English wool was of the first importance to Northern Europe, as the shipping material of the Baltic and German silver were of the first importance to England. The Germans by their control of silver and shipping first obtained their supremacy over the English wool trade. The upper course of England was from the export of wool to the manufacture

and export of cloth, and the national ideal was to secure this manufacture and export in English hands. If we have a firm grip of this basic fact, we begin to understand much in English history formerly obscure, and, if we ignore such primary conditions, all the learning in the world will not enable us to reach the heart of the mystery. The struggle between the Merchant Adventurers and the Hanseatic League was the struggle between an insular and an Imperial system of European trade, and it began as a revolt of England against the Empire.

Perhaps these conclusions may seem too wide and grandiose a derivation from the trading rights of a German corporation in mediæval London. But we suggest to our historical authorities that they are at least worth considering, and that it is not to the credit of English history that the whole subject should have been so much ignored. Our historians have run too much in certain grooves of religious and constitutional controversy. They have neglected the classical maxim that it is first of all necessary to live, and that the means of life are the foundation of human activity. They have, in fact, been too much professors and clerics, and too little men of the world and affairs. We suggest for a national school of history this economic foundation, and our historical schools might well turn over a new leaf, and begin upon a thorough and scientific study of the Hanseatic League in England and its rival the Merchant Adventurers. An organised body of students with this definite aim, directed by a mind not innocent of trade questions, might arrive at information of the very greatest value to our national culture.

And those students who delight in the minutiae of such a subject would not go unrewarded. The Hanseatic League was settled not only in London, but also in certain provincial ports and towns, Lynn, Hull, and possibly Norwich among them. What share had the "Almains" in Ket's Rebellion, and in Wyatt's raid on London, to take two examples from many in which clues seem to promise much from inquiry? There are also the relations of the League with Scotland and Ireland to be considered. What substance is there in the Irish Chronicler's statement that the seaports of Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick were subject to the Empire? Why is there a village on the Firth of Forth called Dalmeny? Was it a settlement of the Almains? Was Stirling the town of the Easterlings? Why did William Wallace write a letter to Lübeck after the battle of Stirling Bridge?

All these are questions which "teaze us out of thought," and deserve to be answered. History, like law, should be unprejudiced, yet should have a national inspiration, and we suggest that there is room at Oxford or Cambridge for a national school of history which should not disdain national interests and national economics, hitherto the disregarded foundations of great events.

THE TRIUMPHS OF BAD TEMPER.

IT is very odd that man who puts up with so much should get vexed with so little. In this life of ours we have had enough ills to bear, God knows. We are flung down on this world without our choosing; we know not whence we come or whither we go; we hold this rickety house, the body, on an uncertain tenure; and buffeted, as we are, by the winds of disease, disappointment and privation, we might be pardoned if we grumbled constantly at the hard contract we are asked to perform. Yet, in the main we grumble not: we smile and endure. Nay, more, we laugh and sing; go merrily about our business; prop up what must fall and gather what must be scattered; brave superfluous terrors in the sky and under the sea; and, before we die, beget children to succeed to our own very questionable inheritance.

Thoughtful people must always wonder at this en-

duration shown by common men and women. Doomed to this long rear-guard action which is our life, we fight bravely on for the most part, selling each yard of ground dearly, and not questioning our orders. And then one day a trifle occurs; a mere nothing; a little passing annoyance, and man, the tired soldier, blazes out in open mutiny. The queer creature erupts. He grows red in the face and exclaims that he will stand it no longer. He is silent after dreadful wounds; and then for a pinprick he loses his temper.

The explanation, no doubt, lies in the fact that man is a theatrical animal. Tragedy makes him feel strangely at home. There is a subtle, though perhaps unhealthy, pride, a secret satisfaction in having a great sorrow to bear. "I've buried four," a poor woman will say, and then expect applause. A convict or a bankrupt will speak freely of his "better days," and speak without bitterness. A poor clerk, sent unexpectedly to shiver and be blown up in the trenches, will summon up his courage and play the man.

Let anyone see himself as the protagonist of the drama, and he will strut and declaim bravely enough. But unfortunately there are certain small evils that do not admit of dramatic treatment; that don't go into the scene; that are mean and commonplace, disturbing to the dignity and excruciatingly irritating; and before these we collapse. Useless to attempt the air of martyrdom towards a draughty door or a creaking gate; to fold one's arms before the jab of an umbrella; to play the spartan about tight boots or a frayed collar; to "stick out" a flapping blind or a stud that cannot be found. Our poor human wit can throw no grandiloquence and glamour over things like these. For these find out the heel of Achilles, the joint in the armour. They touch us to the quick, and we cry out that would tax the patience of Job.

And yet, even Job, who was a patient man, lost his temper in the end, and then only for a trifle. In one day, we are told, he lost all his servants and camels, yet remained in complete command of his temper. On the same day he was deprived of one sweep of all his sons and daughters, and he said nothing beyond a few words of conventional regret. The devil, however, was not deceived. He knew, and complained, that these were no true tests of a man's patience. He had thought of a better way of getting at the man of Uz. He sent Job a few boils, and Job stood up and cursed the day on which he was born.

It is possible that if Scotland Yard were to understand these facts about bad temper fewer murders would remain undetected. Again and again, when men are found mysteriously stabbed, the newspapers say that no motive can be found for the crime. But let us look into our hearts and ask ourselves at what times we feel most prompted to slay our fellow-man. Is it for the great things or the small? We can all be gentle and forbearing under great injuries. A man has robbed you, let us say, or decoyed your wife away, or deprived you of your good name. On these occasions we can, and sometimes do, act magnificently. We can say, "Brother, I forgive you. Who am I to be your judge? I also have sinned." But what do you think about the man who breathes hard, who hums, who opens the door and makes the fire smoke, who enters a clean railway carriage with a dripping mackintosh? For such a man we know that forgiveness is impossible. His presence is an offence and the soul mews out suddenly for his blood.

Some people when they lose their temper do desire literally to commit murder. Others scold their wives or beat their children. Others, again, smash things. Probably there is no man living who has not in his time broken some costly object in a rage, felt the swift savage joy as it dashes to pieces, and the immediate sense of sin that succeeds. Is there a golfer who has never thrown away his clubs? This subject has, by the way, been dealt with by the learned Dr. Carter, who links it up to a custom in the dark ages of trying and condemning not only the murderer, but also the in-

strument of murder. But be this as it may, there is no doubt that we feel most angry when there is nothing, animate or inanimate, on which to take vengeance. Then our rage turns against the universe itself. The cope of heaven oppresses us like a cage. Creation grows jaundiced, and we become sharply aware of the dark calamity of living.

This weakness of man is humiliating. Yet there is something exciting in the idea that the calmest of us carries in his breast a dangerous bomb that may go off at any moment. The bombs of some work with a short fuse. The match is applied and—bang!—they explode. The fuse of others is longer. You can hear the deadly hissing before the detonation.

In the same way each man has his own peculiar irritant, though there are some that are simple and universal. We all resent clouds of dust, corns, banging windows, blows on the thumb, and the sudden feel of stickiness. We have all suffered with the man who talks when one wants to go to bed, snores, hums, shuffles with his feet, or whistles out of tune. Another common cause of annoyance is the failure of some mechanical device to act at the required moment. Under this head comes studs which fail to hold one's shirt together at the front; chests of drawers which won't open and finally fall forward; and bootlaces which break short when you touch them.

There are other anguishes so unique that they deserve a class to themselves. To take a case in point: You are wheeling a bicycle up a hill, and the pedal turns unaccountably round and strikes you on the back of the calf. Few things are quite like this. The sharp and sudden pain, the feeling of heat and fatigue that precedes it, and the humiliation of knowing that it is in a sense self-inflicted are exquisitely mortifying.

An even worse provocation occurs when the body cries out for a hot bath and finds that it must encounter a cold one. The feel of the chilly stuff that issues from the tap, the sharp physical disappointment, and the inability of a naked man to run at once downstairs and lay the blame where it is due will provoke an angel, cause an average man to swear, and bring a bad-tempered one to the verge of tears. And, no doubt, the reader can think of other and even worse instances.

The cure for a bad temper doesn't exist. In this there is one consolation, that in losing your own temper you may be helping other people to keep theirs. Yet to watch another man keep his temper is the worst annoyance of all.

THE YELLOW TICKET OR CHERCHEZ LA FORMULE.

CONFRONTED with a successful play we look at once for the formula. "Cherchez la formule" is more expert advice in such cases than "cherchez la femme." It more often than not amounts to the same thing; but "cherchez la formule" is the more professional method of approach.

The formula of 'The Yellow Ticket,' a drama which was enthusiastically received at the Playhouse the other day, is one of the simplest and least fallible of them all. This play has been irrelevantly described as a play of Russian life. It has even, we are told, been withheld from view for several years owing to the fears of our Lord Chamberlain that it might hurt the feelings of Tsar Nicholas and his Ministers. This sounds like an extravagant canard at the expense of St. James's Palace, more especially as we can hardly think that those who, it is alleged, hesitated to wound the feelings of an Imperial colleague and friend in his days of prosperity would issue a licence for the wounding of his feelings immediately in the hour of his adversity. The Palace licensing authorities

have been guilty in their time of many offences against art and sense—offences which were once accustomed to inflame young critics to the point of frenzy. But not even their worst enemies have charged them with anything to compare with this. We prefer to disbelieve the whole story. 'The Yellow Ticket' is no more a play of Russian life than 'Seven Days' Leave' is a play of English life. It is a capital melodrama founded on a formula which is theatrically almost fool-proof. Briefly it is a play whose principal scene displays an attempted rape in considerable detail. Adopting Touchstone's sub-division of the lie, we may conveniently, for reasons which will shortly appear, describe the formula of 'The Yellow Ticket' quite tersely as the 'Rape Circumstantial.'

There have been several successful instances recently of this particular formula. Playgoers have of late had unusually handsome opportunities of beholding their favourite actresses suffer the most extravagant indignities. Only the other day Miss Madge Titheradge was assaulted and drugged at the Garrick Theatre ('Tiger's Cub'). A little previously Miss Irene Vanbrugh was physically cowed into accepting the full consequences of marriage at the Duke of York's Theatre ('The Land of Promise'). Miss Ethel Irving still engages nightly in a horrifying tussle with Mr. C. M. Hallard at the Ambassador's Theatre ('The Three Daughters of M. Dupont'). And now we may see Miss Gladys Cooper desperately at close quarters with a super-subtle baron of courtly melodrama. These instances suffice to show that the formula is not uncommon; also that it may be subject to piquant variations.

The Rape Circumstantial must not be confused with the Rape Direct of ordinary melodrama, where the villain of the piece offers violence and is immediately foiled. The Rape Circumstantial must be attended with aggravating circumstances. These circumstances may be infinitely various. A favourite modern version is to display the parties to the episode as husband and wife. An ingenious dramatist not so long ago conceived the happy idea of presenting the scene as occurring between a Chinaman and a respectable English matron ('Mr. Wu'). Mr. Somerset Maugham exhibited his ravisher as a handsome fellow of whom a woman in the audience was heard to wonder how the heroine could seriously have resisted him. M. Brieux has presented him as a ruffian poisoned with alcohol ('Maternité'). These are some of the devices which lend a charm to the Rape Circumstantial. It is almost a matter of indifference whether the rape is successful or not. This apparently is a matter of taste concerning which there is some disputing. M. Brieux has tried both issues. Mr. Maugham's rape was successful. Mr. Morton's at the Playhouse is not.

The circumstances in which Miss Gladys Cooper is maltreated in 'The Yellow Ticket' are indicated by the title of the play. The yellow ticket is a ticket issued by the Russian authorities to a prostitute, authorising her to go where she pleases in pursuit of her calling. According to Mr. Morton (for whose statements concerning imperial Russia we accept no responsibility), a Jewess who desires to visit Petrograd in order to behold her dying father must apply for a *laissez passer*, and the only effective document available is this same yellow ticket of the prostitute. Mr. Morton's heroine is the possessor of a yellow ticket, and is expected by the police, in the interests of law and order, to satisfy the conditions of its tenure. It will at once be realised that the position of a lady who is officially a prostitute, but morally intact, is likely to be attended with inconvenience. We know what to expect almost as soon as the wicked baron appears and kisses the lady's hand in an excess of elaborate admiration and, when the baron arranges that she shall come to him if in trouble, and incidentally arranges that she shall be in considerable trouble before nightfall, even the stupidest onlooker begins to enjoy the prospect. We doubt if we have ever seen a play where the situa-

tion we are discussing has been so thoroughly well digested both in the prospect and the fulfilment.

The scene itself is a "linked sweetness long drawn out." It is midnight in the baron's palace. Miss Cooper arrives, and is brought to the innermost stronghold. The baron is kind, and Miss Cooper is unsuspecting. The baron begins obscurely to approach the real subject of their interview. But this is to get on too fast, and the Act is yet young. So the baron is interrupted. A young man has called. It is the young man who loves the baron's victim. The victim is shown hurriedly into a side chamber while a skilful intermezzo is performed in order that our pleasant anticipations may not be unduly curtailed. When the young man has been sent about his business, the baron resumes his enterprise. Miss Cooper at last becomes aware of his intentions. There is the usual frantic shaking of locked doors (the keys, of course, are in the baron's pocket), followed by some preliminary onslaughts. But again our author, knowing his trade, utters the warning "Festina lente." The baron is in full uniform, with spurs and stiff military trimmings; and the baron is a delicate fellow in these affairs. So again he interrupts his advances in order that he may retire into an inner chamber and change into a dinner jacket.

This undoing of the baron's military tunic proves to be the undoing of the baron himself. For this is one of the plays in which the Rape Circumstantial does not take place. While the baron is preparing in the inner chamber Miss Cooper is discovering that her hat-pin, tenderly removed by the baron himself only half an hour before, has distinct possibilities as a lethal weapon. So when the baron returns for a third time to the matter in hand he is suddenly and effectively slain, and Miss Cooper's title to the yellow ticket triumphantly disproved.

We have lingered a little upon this scene because it is essential to show that Mr. Morton's play is really about a rape and not about the Russian secret police or the Russian aristocracy or Russian imperial politics. It is typical of the formula we are examining that in plays where it is adopted it should always be possible to disguise the nakedness of the author's design. If the public were coarsely invited to witness a play about a rape the public might be seized with misgiving, and be shy of attending. 'The Yellow Ticket,' advertised as 'The Rape of Marya Varenka,' would not have a very good chance of success. All successful plays of this kind are decorously veiled in their intention. 'The Land of Promise' set out to be a play about Canada. M. Brieux in 'Maternité' sets out to attack the French social system. Mr. Morton is entirely in the tradition in announcing his play as a play about Russian life in the 'nineties. These pretences enable the most decorous of playgoers to enjoy the formula without even suspecting its existence. We are accordingly justified in being at some pains to publish what 'The Yellow Ticket' is all about. Readers of the SATURDAY REVIEW will probably not care to attend the play under a false impression.

Mr. R. C. Carton's formula at the Queen's Theatre is almost as equally well-worn as Mr. Morton's; but it requires a fresher and a lighter handling than he has been able to give to it. When a young husband who really loves his wife threatens to run away from her with a beautiful dancer, hardened dramatic practitioners know there is only one really infallible way for his wife to bring him back again, namely, to pretend to run away with any nice fellow who happens to be at hand. The formula may be described as "A Roland for your Olivia." Mr. Carton plays with it conscientiously according to all the rules and Miss Compton, by her clever acting, almost brings it through. But this is a more difficult formula than Mr. Morton's, and Mr. Carton has not sufficiently disguised the fact that it has already served the turn of many dramatists before him.

HANDWRITING.

A CLEAR handwriting was apparently in Hamlet's day considered a vulgar affair unworthy of a public man. A similar carelessness in the handling of the pen has become a growing feature of our own times. Not so long since one of the best-informed men in the House of Commons had one of the worst handwritings in that mixed assembly. Sometimes he could not read his own wild symbols. He had got into a habit of working at top speed, and could not help hurrying his hand, with the result that he wasted his own time and other people's. Dean Stanley was another desperate offender. A short postcard of his took an experienced decipherer three strenuous sittings to master. It was about as difficult as the mathematical parts of Plato. We have in our possession the signature of a publisher which none of our friends has ever read, or, indeed, begun to form into anything coherent. We know an instructor of youth and an accomplished writer who are both incorrigible in this way. Their script is not so much a hieroglyphic as an impious performance.

Journalists who have to write daily, and often in a hurry, have some measure of excuse; but the hand of less employment should have a daintier sense—a decent sense of what the writer owes to others in penmanship. What the compositor can make out is amazing, but the burden placed on him is grossly unfair; and in some cases he has extra pay, we believe. He certainly deserves it.

Tennyson once said, not thinking of himself, that great men had terse handwritings. They waste no time over the flourishes which betray vanity; they do not go beyond a single line under their signatures; they do not need to advertise themselves by superfluous ornament. Dickens is an exception whose numerous flourishes appear even in the signatures on his cheques. They support the view that he was, or might have been, a great actor. As it was, he was always, after he came into prominence, something of the actor posing before his vast public, a vain bourgeois of genius. The darlings of the stage are full of flourishes in the dashing signatures which are attached to advertisements.

Reputation plays a humbugging part in handwriting as in other things. All great writers are apt to be credited with beautiful handwritings, whether they possess them or not, and few of them in our experience take the trouble to be neat, if that is not their habit. Erehwon Butler wrote a beautiful and absolutely clear hand, though his habit of copying out notes daily might have easily led to the opposite. But he took special pains with his hand when he saw it taking on "feral characteristics." The worst of it is that the writer himself cannot see his gradual lapse into meaningless symbols, and check himself before it is too late. His friends endure his growing illegibility, and he goes on scribbling complacently, unless he has to make a special show, as when he is writing a testimonial which will go before important eyes.

On the whole, we should expect men of action to write better than authors because they write less, and have more chance to preserve their first, fair innocence. Tennyson, who would never write letters if he could help it, wrote a clear and pretty hand. Nelson, though a man of action, would always be writing, and shambled away over endless sheets of paper. Andrew Lang was one of the busiest and wildest of penmen, and his books and articles suffered thereby. He talked of writing one word and seeing another by a visual hallucination, but the fault was more obvious than that. Perhaps the writing revealed the man. Was it due to his gipsy blood which hurried him along, ever to fresh adventures among masterpieces and trivialities? Many of his books are good, but most of them might have been better with more time and pains spent over them. Character in handwriting is a fascinating study but one easily overdone. We knew two men

of different training and education who wrote precisely alike even to a close observer. The Greek form of 'e' is generally a hint of education, and clever boys are fond of copying the hand of their favourite schoolmasters. From such a source, perhaps, comes the excellent and highly educated hand of Sir Douglas Haig. Boys and girls also copy their parents consciously or unconsciously, but the divergencies in a large family are often marked.

What may fairly be called a pretty hand is often, as old Bunyan said, "nearer, less pleasant." Graces of penmanship grow into disguises for the reader. The idea of being different from other people or original—vanity again—leads to illegibility. Fortunately the typewriter has been invented and increases its range every day for writing which, as the Americans put it, is "worth while." This useful invention did not come a moment too soon, as may be gathered from the simple fact that in the Indian Civil Service examination, attempted only by the most highly educated class of young men, marks are taken off for bad handwriting. To be legible is the first and chief business of any writer of anything from a bill to an invitation to dinner. Aids and graces can come later, or not come at all. The man who talks in a deprecating way of his own clear handwriting as ugly is wasting his breath.

The shambling, impious, illegible cursives that come before us every day mark the decadence of English handwriting. In the eighteenth century a good, clear hand, orderly and graceful, was common, but then everybody did not try to write. This is one of the reasons why it is difficult to ascertain the personality of Junius, for his script is very like that of many of his well-instructed contemporaries. That fastidious scholar Gray wrote, as might be expected, a perfect hand, clear even when it was minute, as in his *Naturalist's Calendar* of the months, which was sold recently. Scholarship, we think, tends to legibility, for scholarship is nothing if it is not accurate, and the typical scholar is a deliberate, rather careful and cautious person. He does not dash into advertisements of himself and first-rate soaps for public reading. He has his vanity, but it is of a different sort. His sense of scansion and quantities should make him careful about the fair presentation of syllables.

The worst offenders are those who not only misform their letters, but even divide words in an arbitrary fashion, thus doubling the difficulties of reasonable conjecture. What is to be done with them, if they will not take to a typewriter? They almost justify the bold solution of the recipient of an illegible postcard who wrote in reply accepting his friend's invitation to dinner on Tuesday next. Mark Twain has made excellent fun of the illegibilities of Horace Greeley, and another bright American wit regarded an unreadable letter as a family heirloom—something to be taken out and read year after year as a new thing, ever fresh in its hidden possibilities of meaning.

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Letters have taken on a new poignancy in these days of trial and tragedy. The "touch of a vanished hand" is pathetic, but painful, too, is the sign-manual of failing powers. There is a resemblance between

THE
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29 September 1917.

GRATIS.

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Dilke's long and abnormally active public life is divided into two periods, of almost the same length. There were the eighteen years between his first election for Chelsea in 1867 and the scandal in 1885; there were four years of miserable retirement; and there were the nineteen years between his re-entry into Parliament in 1892, and his death in 1911. The first was the happy and successful period. These volumes, therefore, cover a public and crowded life of some forty years. It is impossible to praise too highly the industry and tact with which Miss Tuckwell has discharged her task of compiling what will certainly rank as a great political biography. It ought, perhaps, to be called an autobiography, for nine-tenths of the matter are supplied by Sir Charles Dilke's own memoirs and correspondence. Miss Tuckwell's comments are sparing and relevant; and, while she obviously writes as a loving disciple, there is no indiscriminate or emotional eulogy. Party politics are touched with a cool and slightly scornful impartiality, which, doubtless, was caught from the master.

Though only the second baronet, Sir Charles Dilke's family was ancient. With an ample fortune, and a highly cultivated mind, Dilke, at the age of twenty-six, was a veritable *trouvaille* for the Radicals: not since the days of Hobbhouse and Burdett, nearly half a century earlier, had they found a gentleman to champion the cause of the Extremists. There is this to be said for Dilke's Radicalism, that it was consistent, independent, and adopted as the fruit of study, not with the object of getting into Parliament. There was nothing of what is called in a vile phrase the Little Englander about Dilke, who was always a resolute Imperialist. Before entering the House of Commons, he had travelled round the world, and written 'Greater Britain,' which made his reputation, and on which, as

sounding the first note of Imperialism, it is probable that much of his posthumous fame will rest. He was elected in 1867 for the old borough of Chelsea (now divided into Chelsea and North and South Kensington), and, though he deluged the electors with the driest of statistical speeches, he apparently did not disdain the aid of a little physical force, for "Dilke's Lambs" were the terror of respectable electors. The well-dressed and handsome young Radical, with plenty of money, startled the world by avowing his preference for the republican form of government, and he opposed wedding grants to princes and princesses. For many years Dilke was cut by everybody but the Prince of Wales, who took the more politic course of making friends with him, and asking him to dinner. In 1870 he was a spectator of the Franco-German War as a Red-Cross man, and what he then saw of the arrogance and brutality of the Germans changed his whole view of continental politics, and made him for the rest of his life the fervent friend of France. A real intimacy was formed with Gambetta, of whom there are many good stories; but, as an example of wit, perhaps none better than this. "What does Russia want with a 'Parlement'? her two generals supply her with one: Skobelof, *parle et Ignatief, ment.*" His dislike and distrust of Germany grew stronger every year of his life, and when he was a member of Gladstone's Government, he boldly denounced the policy of "pandering to Germany" by giving her slices of Africa, here and there, particularly at Zanzibar. When Gladstone formed his Government in 1880, he was sorely troubled about Dilke. Gladstone was no Radical—Dilke writes of "his Scotch deference to the aristocracy"—and he would have liked to leave out both Chamberlain and Dilke. There was, however, no excuse for leaving out Chamberlain: but with Dilke there was the hostility of Queen Victoria to be pleaded. To Gladstone's astonishment he found that Dilke and Chamberlain had sworn a bond of brotherhood by which one would not take office without the other; indeed, the compact was that both must be in the Cabinet! To his honour, Dilke refused with contempt all suggestions that he should publicly recant his republican theories, or climb down in the matter of royal grants. Finally, he consented to become Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, while Chamberlain became President of the Board of Trade. Dilke was the only politician who knew anything about European politics, and it is a thousand pities he was not made Secretary of State, for a more imbecile Foreign Secretary than Lord Granville this country never had. Being pre-eminently qualified to deal with Foreign Affairs, he was, of course, removed from the Foreign Office after two years, and made President of the Local Government Board, with a seat in the Cabinet. We can quite understand that both Gladstone and Granville were anxious to remove from the Foreign Office so competent and so outspoken a critic of their blunders in Egypt and in Afghanistan and Turkey. Dilke, together with his friend Gambetta, was in favour of a vigorous joint intervention in Egypt by France and England; but Gambetta's Government fell, and France withdrew from Alexandria. As President of the Local Government Board, Dilke had to conduct the negotiation with Lord Salisbury over the redistribution of seats by the Reform Act of 1884, and so skilfully did he do his work, that for years afterwards "Dilke's gerrymandering" was cursed by outwitted Tories. Gladstone's Government fell in June, 1885, on the Budget, and a few months later Dilke himself fell.

Over the divorce court episode Miss Tuckwell naturally and properly glides quickly. We have no wish to rake the cinders of an extinct scandal. Dilke took the worst possible advice, that of the two first lawyers of the day, Sir Henry James and Sir Charles Russell, who persuaded him not to go into the box, as the case against him had been dismissed. But the world of laymen could not understand how Mrs. A. could com-

mit adultery with Mr. B. without Mr. B. committing adultery with Mrs. A. Nobody but a lawyer can grasp that proposition. The result was that Dilke's intimate friends believed him to be innocent, or, at least, said so, and what is the use of friends if they will not do so much? But the larger group of acquaintances, or friendlies, and the great majority of the outer world believed him to be guilty. Parnell, like Dilke, was ruined by a woman, but Dilke's case was far more tragical. Parnell was a coarse, vulgar blackguard, for all his high-bred manner and Leonardo head. He was as ignorant as a coal-heaver, and his only motive in public life was insane hatred of England. Whereas Dilke really felt what he called "the religion of life" in politics, and a fine mind was overthrown by fate. He found a constituency, the Forest of Dean, to return him to Parliament in 1892, and until his death. It is impossible to repress admiration of the courage and stoical endurance with which Sir Charles Dilke faced a situation, which, to a proud man, must have been a long-drawn torture. For Dilke knew the world too well not to know that his power was gone, irrecoverably taken from him. Yet he threw himself into parliamentary business with demonic energy, probably because if he had not, he would have gone mad or died. And in these last nineteen years he did "the State some service," very great service in many ways. He denounced Lord Salisbury's cession of Heligoland to Germany, and was never weary of trying to arouse his countrymen to the German danger. Bismarck, who loved a strong and outspoken man, and who could not see that the divorce court had made Dilke a political pariah, invited him to stay with him at Friedrichsruh, and there are several good Bismarck stories in these volumes. But Dilke's most useful exertions were on the subject of Army Reform, in which he co-operated with Mr. Arnold Forster and Mr. Spenser Wilkinson. All these men were aghast at the ignorance and indifference of the parties to the question of national defence. Dilke gave some very good advice and much industrious assistance to the Labour Party, which was rising into political importance. It was thought at one time that he might become the leader of the Labour Party, but he was not the man for the Trade-Unionist agitators. They wanted someone who would do what they told him, not a profound student of labour problems who had been a trade-unionist before they were born. Dilke was not the man to take orders from anybody. He was very tenacious of his own opinions, which he formed after a severe investigation of the facts. The last, but not the least useful, of his public services was the Chairmanship of a Committee on the Income-Tax, on which he presented an elaborate report, based on such facts as he could get, which were not perhaps wholly reliable.

Sir Charles Dilke despised oratory, and, consequently, was one of the dullest speakers that ever addressed a meeting or the House of Commons. He was totally deficient in a sense of humour, and he had no idea of literary perspective. All facts, provided they were facts, were to him equally important, and he made no attempt to arrange them. His mind was like a bank of sand, and dribbled facts and figures ceaselessly. He was too didactic to be an agreeable conversationalist; he was not light in hand; and latterly became something of a bore. He overworked himself and those who were under him, dictating to a secretary at dinner, and that kind of thing. Dr. Johnson complained comically that John Wesley's agreeableness was impaired by his always having to go at a certain time, instead of folding his legs and having the talk out. Dilke was like that: he was always *affairé*; always in a hurry: even his violent amusements were regulated by the clock. He would have been twice as effective, certainly more pleasant, if he had done half as much as he did or wished to do in a day.

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IN ninety-nine per cent. of cases, obscurity of style in an author deservedly condemns him to an equal obscurity of reputation. Obscurity of style is usually the result of (1) incompetence, (2) laziness, or (3) insolence. Incompetence is usually to blame. It is a common delusion that nothing is simpler for a man who has something to say than to say it in plain English. Plain English, however, is never so plain as it looks. It can only be plain by virtue of being so exactly suited to the author's mood, subject, sentiment, or idea that it exactly conveys the author's precise intention. Such English is so difficult to write that the members of those professions which have absolute need of precise understandings do not attempt to make use of it. No lawyer or diplomatist would dream of trying to convey his meaning to his fellow-practitioners in plain English, not because he dislikes plain English, but because his work would at once become almost impossible if he tried invariably to write it. It is a thousand times easier for him to speak and write in the special jargon of his profession—a kind of shorthand (though usually by no means short) which the experts have agreed among themselves never to misunderstand or to interpret in any other way than according to conventional practice. Most people realise that it would be unwise to make a will or to present an unfriendly ultimatum in plain English. The reason is that unless you are a master of the art of exact expression you are likely in plain English to convey to your heirs or to your enemies either more or less than you intended. We may, in fact, be reasonably sure, whenever we hear bluff people saying that plain English is good enough for them (implying thereby that such things as literary training and style are unnecessary inventions of the super-subtle Venetians of this world), that such people are unable either to write plain English or to recognise it when they read it.

Many authors, then, are obscure because they cannot be plain. Others are obscure because, though they know that plain English is quite as difficult as plain counterpoint or plain mathematics, they are too lazy to arrange their thoughts, or to take the pen seriously in hand. Such people usually employ a shorthand typist and toss to the public two or three times a year the raw materials of an excellent book. The third type of obscurity plumbs a dark abyss of moral perversity. There are authors, usually young, who climb into an ivory tower and wait for the world to cluster at the foot of their refuge. They are proud to be above common understanding. They refuse to write plain English, because they refuse to have a plain mind upon plain questions. Their crime is insolence, like the crime of the man who is proud of a vile handwriting sufficiently unlike all ordinary caligraphy to be almost wholly illegible.

We have now accounted for ninety-nine per cent. of the books which are not as easily read as they should be; but we have yet to explain the illustrious exceptions—authors who, despite their obscurity, have achieved fame, and who, somehow, have induced patient admirers to spell a dubious way to the heart of their meaning. Our attitude to such authors depends upon our attitude to life itself. To some people life is a comparatively simple affair. All the spades are spades. The acts of life are all quite definite and simple. The processes of nature and of the mind are exactly what they appear to be, and nothing more. Phenomena, or the things which appear, are sufficient for them. They are not troubled with visions of the material world as an unsubstantial pageant, or as an open texture thinly concealing wavering and elusive verities. For them the motives and thoughts of men are straightforward and easily named. They concern themselves with no

dark and intricate workings beneath the threshold of consciousness. They admit no reason why anything worth saying should not be said in the plainest English by competent authors. To them, however, comes Browning with his impatient cry, a cry which might well serve as the warlike device of the romantic authors who smashed the English classical tradition: "Oh, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp!" These romantics lived only for glimpses of unprecedented truth caught in moments of excitement; for crowding and swift impressions which must be captured as they vanished, or were transformed; which called for a feverish transcription. Actions, thoughts, the whole moving panorama of life—these things, to borrow a simile from the physical sciences, served them as dark objects in the presence of light—of less account for themselves than for their function in intercepting and revealing the presence of the rays which struck them from afar. The assurance and calm and clarity of the luminous Augustans was incompatible with the whole enterprise of the romantics. Where the Augustans were satisfied with consolidating the conquests of the human intellect, the romantics aimed at extending its bounds.

The only way towards increasing the resources of human expression lies through the concrete (by which all our perceptions are limited) towards the abstract. All language is metaphor, and new thought can never in the last resort be anything but the application of original and suggestive metaphor to abstract speculation. The human mind scales the empyrean upon the five-runged ladder of the senses, throwing out into the void a metaphorical net in which things invisible may be drawn to the shores of intellectual consciousness. The bounds of human knowledge (apart from scientific knowledge, which, in this connection is worth nothing at all), can only be extended by poets and philosophers who almost necessarily are not immediately and at all times intelligible to their contemporaries. When excited intuition drives metaphorically at an idea for which as yet no accepted abstract term is current, we must accompany our poet as explorers upon a difficult adventure. We cannot expect to be as comfortable or as sure of definite results with the Stanleys of the dark continent of the mysteries of life and death as with the Lunnys of the civilised and habitable country of things known.

But what has all this to do with the author whose volumes stand at the head of our column? A defence of impetuous Browning or Meredith, excitedly hunting the processes of mind and soul with novel metaphor, hardly includes the psychologist of 'The Golden Bowl.' The Meredithian page wrestles with an Angel of mystery who in the struggle may, or may not, allow us a sight of his countenance. But Henry James wrestles with no angel. He is as cool as a cucumber, as collected and careful as a tight-rope man. His style, far from suggesting a breathless scrambling after nimble intuitions, treads life like a delicate household cat picking her devious way towards a strategic pounce thoroughly well planned in advance. Can the romantic plea be stretched to include him?

There is a clue to the origin of the obscurity of Henry James in the fact that one of the books before us, the book on which he was engaged to the last moment of his life, is essentially a ghostly book. It tells us of a ghost of to-day who is drawn by an insane love and sense of the past to slip out of his century and haunt the people of yesterday. No one but Henry James could gravely and naturally set out to write such a story in this particular way. The hero of the tale walks into the past and enters into intimate relations with its denizens as naturally as other people's heroes might call a taxi, or look in at the club. Henry James makes less fuss about his hero's disappearance into 1870 than he ordinarily makes in his books about an afternoon call, or an apology for arriving late for dinner. The explana-

tion is simple enough, namely, that to Henry James the one thing was actually neither more nor less mysterious than the other. For him no act was simple, and all acts were equally complex. Imaginatively, he lived in a twilight of the soul, where intuition, intelligence, emotion, sensation, or thought—all the components of feeling—threw intricately dappled lights and shadows across each moment of human consciousness. He began as a psychologist analysing complex decisions and states of mind. He ended in a world where even the calling of a cab was the result of a balance in his hero's mind of complicated and poised spiritual forces. We have, in fact, left the robust world of active life and entered a secluded chamber, where the air is only stirred with psychological whisperings, where ghostly voices debate each minutest act. The cheerful ordinary noises of the common world are hushed and muffled. Gradually our eyes are subdued to the twilight, and our ears turned to the thin reedy voices of the argument, and we surrender to the fascination of beholding the actions and thoughts of men insanely subdivided, protracted, magnified. The mind as it functions to the eye of our author behaves like those animals whose motions are photographed by the cinematograph and reproduced at a twentieth or a hundredth of their normal speed. Each stage of the act is seen in detail, where normally we see only the act itself. An act has three parts, says the clown in "Hamlet"—to act, to do, and to perform. It might be a superscription for 'The Golden Bowl' or 'The Ambassadors.'

Henry James thus comes well within the shelter of the romantic formula. He gropes into the recesses of an act where normal eyes are content to rest upon the surface. He is sensitive to things for which there exist no ready convenient abstract terms. He can take us with him only by a free use of suggestion and metaphor, of plain statements which have at once to be qualified to fit a novel shade of meaning. The results are not always impressive, they are sometimes even quite ridiculous; but the romantic invariably risks bathos and defeat in order to attain occasional success. We read Henry James for those entirely felicitous moments when unsuspected refinements and delicate processes of the mind are revealed in one of those inevitable, unprecedented figures of speech in which no author more frequently or more suggestively abounds.

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A Bookman's Budget. Composed and Compiled by Austin Dobson. Humphrey Milford. 3s. 6d. net.

A COMMONPLACE book in the twentieth century! What will the young men who write excessively new poetry and believe only in themselves think of such a survival? Yet there are few things more pleasant than to saunter over half-forgotten, half-familiar country. "To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new"; to-day we can linger where we have wandered before and discover also new choice corners in the field of letters. For we have a sure guide to good sense and good entertainment, which some folks nowadays seem to consider incompatible.

A master of light verse and of the world of books, Mr. Dobson in this busy, hustling, half-educated twentieth century seems like a strayed Augustan. His pen—always deft in prose and dainty in verse—has the neat brevity of the true artist. His 'Eighteenth Century Vignettes' make by this time a goodly show, a fit tribute to the century of wit and good sense. We hope there may be many more of them in spite of Mr. Dobson's ill-health. He has employed a time when he had to give up his plans and projects in the composition of this Commonplace Book,

which is uncommon because it contains many of his own graceful verses, some of them skilful variations on French originals. We find his own prose, too, mingled with a medley of passages which have appealed to his taste, or such pleasant little oddities as occupy the pages of 'Notes and Queries.' Mr. Dobson was, we think, in early days a reviewer in that engaging periodical, and he wrote in 1882:—

"In 'N. and Q.' we meet to weigh
The Hannibals of yesterday;
We trace thro' all its moss o'ergrown,
The script upon Time's oldest stone,
Nor scorn his latest waif and stray."

Glancing over the text we see some things that have been discussed in 'N. and Q.' and "ana" recorded by Mr. Dobson's learned leisure on many a page. We see Henry Fielding posing in his habit as he lived (one of the piquant illustrations in silhouette), proclaiming that newspapers perform constantly, like stage coaches, "the same course empty as well as full," advising on good manners, praising Chesterfield, and after his last sad but cheerful journey earning in his epitaph the tender regret of his country that he was buried in a foreign land. There are gracious memories of Mr. Dobson's friends in Apollo, Lockers-Lampson, and Andrew Lang, and a note on the "curiosa felicitas" of Horace, a phrase which, by the by, might have been ascribed to its author Petronius. "Felicity reduced to a science" is not achieved in a hurry, and we note from our Horatian author this transcript from Boileau:—

"Go your own pace. No showy action
Can do the work of honest traction;
And those who hurry most may find
More than they think is left behind."

Yet there is so little time in this world, as Du Maurier's verses tell us which begin—

"A little work, a little play,
To keep us going—and so, good day!"

We wonder that Mr. Dobson resisted the temptation to add the haunting little verses on which these are founded:—

"La vie est vaine:
Un peu d'amour,
Un peu de haine . . .
Et puis—bon jour!"

La vie est brave;
Un peu d'espoir,
Un peu de rêve,
Et puis—bon soir."

Their author, often inquired after, was a Belgian, Léon de Montenaken. "Tedium Vitae," as another page shows, comes on the best and wisest. We cannot always be resisting black care by riding our hobby-horses in our several ways. Differences of taste are curiously exhibited here. Arnold, of Rugby, could boast of reading 'Humphry Clinker' fifty times, and Disraeli had been through 'Pride and Prejudice' seventeen times. What overweening critics can do is shown through Macaulay, what they should do in some neat French advice. We pass from 'Old-World Remedies' and George Herbert on 'Drugs and Herbs' to that ham and beef shop which haunted Lamb in the Lakes. The gourmet may lick his lips in vain over the record of nine succulent dishes which Mr. Dobson has discovered in Pepys, "all things mighty noble and to my great content," and this fine dinner for seven or eight was "most neatly dressed by our owne only mayde"! "Credite posteri!" as Mr. Dobson remarks. We learn that it was either Napoleon or Talleyrand that made the mot about the sublime and the ridiculous, and we see the latter in one of the illustrations pictured in the dotage of old age. Characteristically Mr. Dobson does not find all the rancour that Rossetti did in this sketch by Maclise. He is not the worse a critic for his kindliness, and he

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discovers good things in the forgotten prose of Sala. We do not think that much can really be said for Dickens's use of Leigh Hunt's personality in Harold Skimpole, brilliant as the result is. Mr. Dobson mentions the interest taken some years since in Lydia White, that determined blue-stocking who made up her soiree to the last. The references he gives from Bulwer and Walter Scott were used in 1910 by W. P. Courtney, who included a neat sketch of this lively, absurd, and good-natured Welshwoman in his 'Eight Friends of the Great.'

Jeffrey, "liveliest of critics," as Mr. Dobson quotes, is to the few who read him to-day one of the dullest of the tribe. His pompous, patronising sentences, full of Scottish reservations and political prejudices, have long ceased to dazzle anyone. He was really no judge of poetry, as Scott declared, but he had a useful spice of malice in his composition. We can well imagine him expecting an ideal article on a dull biographer from one who "lates the man and knows the subject." "Always attack somebody" was, we have heard, the advice of the truculent W. E. Henley. Fortunately, perhaps, he did not live to see this present age of praise for sad duffers. Literary manners are said to have improved, and few, we dare say, know the name of the versifier who wrote:—

"Though the latitude's rather uncertain,
And the longitude also is vague,
The persons I pity who know not the City—
The beautiful City of Prague!"

The Bohemian of to-day does not see the accusing dawn steal through the blinds as his predecessors did. But he has not the graceful pen of William Jeffery Prowse, who, says Mr. Dobson, "if he had gone further towards the 'lost old age' of which he sang . . . might have ranked high as a verseman."

Progress! that is a comforting word for the complacent, but the world is not so full of amazing talent that we can afford to ignore the past, or think all the newest things the best. Prospero's Dukedom is rich in old treasures which keep their glow and value, and no master of the ceremonies gives us better glimpses of that august realm than Mr. Dobson. His book is the happiest mixture of old and new that we have seen for many a day.

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THE above books cover periods ranging from the sixteenth century to July 1914; but it is none the less true of them all that from our point of view to-day they deal with things which we may consider "unhappy" or the reverse, but certainly with things which are "old" and "far-off." The world to which they introduce us is not the world where for the last three years we have all lived, and the result is a sense of unreality, stronger in proportion as the events described approach more closely to that dividing line which has cut in two the lives of a whole generation.

In Richard Dehan's case the unreality is more or less of an agreeable kind. None of the eighteen stories here produced in book form come irritatingly near the Rubicon. In fact, we remember reading the pleasant tale which gives the volume its title many years ago. Most of its companions suggest an equally remote origin, while in subject-matter they show a fine disregard for the unities of time and place. The scene changes from Auvergne in the days when Francis I was king to the South Africa of 1904, and anon to Greenland's icy mountains and the coral islands of

the Pacific. The different items vary, as might be expected, in merit; but they are nearly always picturesque and frequently entertaining. A good example of the author's humorous style is 'The Compleat Housewife,' wherein the two principal parts are sustained by the ghost of an eighteenth century peeress and the American bride of her latest descendant. 'Utukuluk,' the tale of an Englishman's love for an Eskimo belle and of the remarkable incident which prevented their marriage, is in more grotesque fashion equally amusing. In a different vein the story of the great bull-moose tracked by gold hunters on their way to Klondyke and the horrible burden he was found to bear may be noted for its power and vividness.

'The Weird of the Pool' is, as its name implies, a Scotch novel. The action takes place in the opening years of the last century, and the plot is curiously involved. We have at least two cases of mistaken, and two more of doubtful identity. A large number of the characters have seen better days, and are suffering from the frowns of adverse fortune; and this nearly always through the machinations of a master-villain—machinations which it is exceedingly difficult to follow. Yet in spite of such defects the book is decidedly attractive. We like nearly all the people with whom we are brought into contact; the Dominie, refreshingly unlike any other schoolmaster in fiction; the broken-down laird, who develops a strange eloquence in his cups; and the "innocent," with his double gift for the construction of scarecrows and of "pottery," otherwise poetry. Even the villain has a side of thorough-going priggishness which in a measure reconciles us to his frequently melodramatic bearing. We are not so much drawn to the ladies of the cast. The gipsy sorceress, with her band of attendant smugglers, is unwisely reminiscent of another Scotch novelist who may not be imitated with impunity. We are not deeply fascinated by the dispossessed heiress, though she works on the land, and, like "our Lombard girls," wears a dagger in her garter, a useful precaution, it would seem, even in the streets of the Northern Athens. The villain's wife and sister are more successful, and his discarded mistress is a striking and unconventional figure.

'Troublers of the Peace' comes latest chronologically of our three subjects, having even a five-page appendix to announce the outbreak of the war. In ease and brilliance the writing attains, we think, a higher level than Miss Syrett has yet reached, and the interest is throughout well sustained. The author claims to depict certain essentially modern phases of life, and in some details we believe her claim to be well founded. There is, of course, nothing new in fiction, any more than in reality, about the conflict of wills between a selfish mother and an equally selfish daughter. But it is, perhaps, new to find the mother lavishing concessions (which include the symbolic latchkey) while the daughter remains irreconcilable. Coteries as ill-mannered, squalid, and vicious as that presided over by the Bohemian painter and his Anarchist sister have existed before the present century; but they would scarcely have numbered girls of the heroine's age and social standing among their members. The theme round which the so-called love interest centres—the young lady's annexation of her prospective stepfather—is, on the other hand, quite devoid of novelty. It is, in fact, unpleasantly familiar under a more repugnant form to students of French light literature. It strikes us as especially old-fashioned at a moment when the brisk lad in khaki reigns supreme over all feminine hearts, and elderly civilians, whatever their intrinsic merit, are relegated to a back seat. Cubism, mixed hockey, and the cult of Nietzsche are among the principal interests of Miss Syrett's characters; and their discussion of these subjects produces much the same sense of remoteness as if they had talked of making a hearty meal off bread and butter, or putting six lumps of sugar in a cup of tea. But we are grateful to the author for the shrewd and lenient judgment which she brings to bear on this

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WHILE it is true that these chatty reminiscences of the gifted writer and experienced diplomatist who, not so long ago, was Serbian Minister in London do not ostensibly aim at giving a full and true history of the circumstances that led up to the war, it is none the less a fact that, so insistently has this catastrophe overshadowed every other issue, his chapter on the Great War will be read with greater interest, and remembered with less effort, than the rest of his pleasant gossip about kings and their courts.

To admit that the poisoned cup which the world is now draining to the very dregs was brewed in the devil's kitchen which we call the Balkans is by no means to attach undue importance to the minor tragedy of Sarajevo which formed the immediate pretext for the war. Far more critically must the historian of our day weigh the issues as between Bulgaria and Serbia, tracing the origins of the present conflict back to the two Balkan Wars, to the real or supposed grievances that rankled after they had been lost and won and to the skilful manner in which these were exploited by the aged Emperor of Austria and the Tsar of Russia, each anxious to be supreme in that cockpit of bloodshed and intrigue. It is in view of this dominant interest of everything that tends to throw light on our darkness that a single sentence of the author's will survive in the recollection of his readers long after his personal memories of royalties, his tributes to Canada and the United States and his agreeable weakness for clairvoyants and mysticism have been forgotten. Count Mijatovich actually writes, not in his haste, but after a lifelong experience of Balkan diplomacy, "I do not hesitate to say that Austria, and not Germany, provoked the war." Had anyone of less weight in diplomatic circles made such a pronouncement, we should have dismissed as the delusion of a visionary this suggestion of Berlin being helplessly involved in the toils of Vienna. As it is, we are compelled to treat the venerable author with the respect that is his due, and we can only excuse his curious view of the situation by allowance for the bias of a patriotic Serbian against his country's bitterest tyrant. Far more convincing is his exposure of the secret treaty between Bulgaria and Austria, for the duplicity of Ferdinand has been such as to confirm the worst that can be said of any man.

Apart from the chapter on the preliminaries of the war, which should be read by all who desire to realise that the Balkans still maintain their proud position as the storm-centre of European politics, the Count has given us a volume of eminently readable retrospect, largely, as is only to be expected from his position, of the personal order and recalling people as interesting and as diverse as Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid, W. T. Stead, four kings and two queens of Serbia, Mr. Roosevelt and Mrs. Pankhurst. Here surely is a human farrago enough for many volumes, and no man of the author's intelligent observation and facile pen could fail to make such material interesting to those who care for intimate sketches of men and women in the public eye. Now and then, it is true, Count Mijatovich rebels against the generally accepted interpre-

tation of his subjects. No one will quarrel with his impression of having entered an electric furnace as soon as he was shown into the presence of Mr. Roosevelt, but some of us must rub our eyes when we see Abd-ul-Hamid described as a "kind-hearted, God-fearing, quiet, patient, man, loving music, poetry, and philosophy"! *Et ego in Arcadia*. . . the present reviewer has also had the honour to stand in that presence at Yildiz, but the ex-Sultan never appeared to him in so agreeable a light. His love of music had to be measured by an execrable habit of strumming with one finger on an untuned piano, and his artistic tastes by the appointments of his kiosk. And these were the least of his offences before God and man.

A fancy for the occult, for séances, and fortune-tellers runs throughout these pages, and, unless the wish is father to the thought, as is often the case with even intellectual people addicted to such practices as a less liberal age punished for black magic, the author certainly received more than one curious confirmation of sinister predictions relating to the royal house of his country, while on one occasion his faith in a clairvoyante even saved him from death in a railway accident. Pleasant gossip of this kind fills many of his pages, and he devotes a perhaps unnecessarily long chapter to praises of the eccentric but charitable Mr. Mackenzie, not long since a familiar personality in the English quarter of Belgrade; but these excursions in lighter vein make a welcome background to the more serious, and often tragic, themes of a life spent in the service of a none too grateful dynasty. Count Mijatovich is one of the last considerable figures of the old diplomacy, and, if for no other reason than the obsolescence of the methods favoured by him and his contemporaries, his memoirs are well worth reading from cover to cover.

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two signatures of Beethoven and Shakespeare of which much has been made. The expert only remarks that their broken letters in each case mean broken health. Shakespeare's hand, as we fancy it at the height of his power, can hardly have been easy. His "quick coming thoughts" were too much for him. If he left his MS. plays without a blot, the letters were surely awry. His pen could not keep pace with those overflowing ideas which gave us such "infinite riches in a little room." We cannot say as much of the difficult hands which we try to decipher to-day.

But we must stop—not for lack of matter. *De te fabula*: we are probably growing illegible ourselves, and teasing the printer.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NOVELS AND MORALS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Bradbourne Hall,
Ashbourne, Derbyshire,
19 September 1917.

SIR,—The reviewer of the two novels "Beyond" and "Rebellion" asks: "What moral purpose do these writers, eminent in their way, think that they serve by the production of such stories as these?"

One effort of such stories is to raise the question whether: "Sir, I think your lady is very fit for a brothel," is really the last word on the subject.

Dr. Johnson and your reviewer believe it is, and from the Doctor's time till now that view has been held by an overwhelming proportion of English teachers of religion and ethics.

Such novels as "Beyond" and "Rebellion" must force some of their readers, though apparently they did not force your reviewer, to face the question again, and consider whether the last word has been said.

To such readers, these novels may seem to have a very definite moral purpose. If it seems to them that the last word is, at best, only a very rough generalisation to which there are numerous exceptions, and, at worst, an entirely mistaken and mischievous view of woman's character, then they may consider that there is a crying need for a great effort to bring people to a saner point of view.

It is possible to say so much without claiming any knowledge of the intentions of the writers, or whether they would admit any "moral purpose."

Any discussion of a problem of morals may be presumed to have a moral purpose, even if one party to the discussion should assume the part of advocatus diaboli.

The literary merit of such work is a separate question, which has no bearing on that of moral purpose.

Yours faithfully,
LAURENCE W. HODSON.

THE FRENCH CANADIANS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Salonika,
9 September 1917.

SIR,—There have appeared in your columns lately numerous letters on the French Canadian question. Is it asking too much to beg you to consider this addition from a Nova Scotia Canadian?

First let me make these statements: If you ask any intelligent traveller who has gone through Canada which he has found the most backward and uneducated province he will say, without any hesitation, Quebec.

Out of about 450,000 men who have enlisted in Canada, 50,000 came from Quebec; of these 50,000 only 10,000 were French Canadians.

The population of Quebec is somewhere about one-fifth or one-sixth of the total population of the Dominion.

Outside Montreal there are very few English born in this province.

The French Canadians who have written in your

columns, without exception, have claimed that their culture is French, the same as that of France.

Now which country is, perhaps more than any other, concerned in this war? Which country has given or sacrificed most?

I should say France.

So, if the French Canadians are true sons of France, why was there not one tremendous rush, of those who could afford it, to go to France to join the French Army?

Why, when recruiting did start in Canada, did these not join at once to go to the succour of their Mother Country?

Then England came into the war. England the land of their adoption; who, after having conquered their country, left them in the enjoyment of all the rights they had enjoyed before, and what is more, saw that those rights were not misused by unscrupulous agents, as had been the case under the old regime.

Surely, if ever one people owed a debt of gratitude to another, it is the French Canadian to the English.

But the cry of England for more men has found no response in their hearts. They prate about their French culture. To do such a thing is a slur on the real culture of France, besides which theirs is a spurious, false thing. It is an insult to France to compare them.

The culture of Quebec is not French. Compare Quebec and Ontario. They are of about equal size. Their natural resources are equally rich. They were, not so long ago, equally populous.

Ontario is the premier province of the Dominion. She stands for all that is best in Colonial thought and endeavour. Then look at Quebec.

Take away Montreal, and Quebec is much as she was at the time Montcalm died for her.

Has the fact that one province has followed English culture and the other French been responsible for this? Most certainly not.

Quebec is Roman Catholic as no other country in the world is.

Quebec has not gone to the war because she lies under the thumb of priests, who talk of French culture while they dream of a Catholic Canada.

Ten thousand French-Canadians in an army of 450,000.

Perhaps recruiting was not carried out tactfully, but it is a poor excuse for a community of slackers to hide behind.

These people live under our flag. We have given them our best. We have treated them as no other nation would have done. They have their own schools and their own religion. But when we ask them to help us, they show their gratitude by sending 10,000 men out of a population of over a million.

The reason is not to be found in their spurious French culture or, as they shamefully call it, the Prussianism of Ontario; it is to be found in the dreams of priests of a Canada in which their word shall be law in Ontario as it is in Quebec.

Yours truly,
BENGE ATLEE,
Capt. R.A.M.C.

IN DEFENCE OF REVUE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—It is seldom that I see the SATURDAY REVIEW, but I happened to come across your issue of 15 September, in which a Philistine puts, possibly as well as it can be put, the point of view of "the ordinary man" in regard to the modern entertainment. It is a point of view with which in the army I am all too familiar, and one which I have been "up against" all my life.

Everybody can enjoy "light music, pretty faces, comedians," and the rest of it, and even such melodies as "If You Were the Only Girl" occasionally. But what a Philistine fails to see is that the tenth man, who, while enjoying all this, has taken the little trouble necessary to find out what the word "fardel"

means before going to "Hamlet," and has educated himself to appreciate the difference between rag-time and the scherzo of a Beethoven symphony, has in him the possibility of a far more exquisite pleasure than any which a Philistine or his like can ever know. A Philistine retorts "Rot!" (forgive the word, but it is the one he would probably use). You are merely airing your superiority, or else are a hypocrite without the courage of your real convictions. To this, of course, there is no answer. There is no argument to prove him wrong, for he can only discover his error and what he is missing by taking the trouble to improve his taste; and this, since he is satisfied with that which he already has, he will never do. One can only turn away in pity, not only for him and for the millions who, because their sense of beauty is undeveloped, are not obtaining from life all that there is to be obtained, but also for ourselves who, having experienced both the higher and lower forms of pleasure, and knowing that the former give the keener enjoyment, can only, being in the minority, stand aside and see our theatres given up to the trash which now fills them.

There is only pity for the Philistines; but a deep feeling of indignation against those who, being called to the education of childhood, have so signally failed in that great trust.

I am, yours, etc.,
A. H. B.

SWEATERS AND OTHER COMFORTS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

8, King's Bench Walk,
Inner Temple, E.C.4,
20 September 1917.

SIR,—Are your good readers going to prove good friends to "Sweaters" again for this the fourth winter of the war? We have made a good start with 10,999 comforts sent me as the result of a Summer Knitting appeal.

The sweaters and other things have outgrown this garret, so will your readers kindly address the sacks and parcels to me, c/o Sir Edward Ward, D.G.V.O., 45, Horseferry Road, S.W.1. They will have heard all about Sir Edward's Central Pool of Comforts with its bases on every front, from which officers can draw direct for exactly what their men need. Waste and delay are thus avoided, but it is a point of honour for us all to keep these base depots well supplied throughout the winter. I know all about the wool difficulty, but we can but do our best and be of good cheer.

I have here at 8, King's Bench Walk, Temple, E.C.4, plenty of easily knitted printed patterns of all comforts, for any ladies who like to write for them. They are, of course, free, but it is considerate to enclose stamps to cover postage. Yours faithfully,

JOHN PENOYRE.

GUIDING THE RAIDERS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—It is difficult to see what good purpose is served by the publication in certain weekly and monthly journals of the details of various contracts entrusted by the Ministry of Munitions to the different firms whose names are given. On the other hand, it is quite easy to imagine that such statements may unwittingly be of material assistance to the enemy, as these publications can become known to the German Press Bureau in Holland within a few hours.

When Sherlock Holmes & Co.'s big factory, so well known for its manufacture of detective stories before the war, is shown by this contract list to be turning out munitions of a given description for all it is worth, even a German Dr. Watson in an aeroplane would know where to drop his explosives with effect.

Any improvement in the air-bombing service of the enemy may make such publicity a very serious matter.

Your obedient servant,
J. LANDFEAR LUCAS.

"CONSERVATIVE" PRINCIPLES.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—The primary duties of Public Authority are First to Defend the Realm, secondly to Preserve the Public Peace, lastly to Administer Justice. The troubles which just now are afflicting us appear to me to arise from our neglect of these primary duties and from our having encouraged our public authorities to take upon themselves other tasks, which in many instances were inconsistent with these primary duties, and in every instance were alien from them. We starved our Army, and it was by sheer good luck that we refrained from starving our Navy. It was by good luck, also, that we were kept from crippling our Police and from cutting down our Courts of Justice at the risk of rendering them insufficient for their tasks. In short, all the primary duties were neglected, and our rulers wandered off into what was called Improving the Condition of the People—a project which is directly impossible, and which can only be accomplished indirectly by setting the People free to improve their own condition. It is not irrelevant to remark here that the phrase "The People" was always used as if there were no "people" except wage-earners—an assumption which needs only to be stated in order that its fallacy may be perceived.

Your correspondent, Mr. John Boyle (SATURDAY REVIEW, 8 September), reminds your readers that one duty of a revived Conservative Party will be to fight Socialism. Now, Socialism is Improving the Condition of Wage Earners, writ short. Most of our latter nineteenth and earlier twentieth century legislative measures—our Employers' Liability Acts, our Insurance Acts, our Trade Union Acts—have been piecemeal Socialism. Nay, more, I am tempted to suspect that socialistically minded politicians are encouraging meddlesome legislation (some of which, no doubt, is rendered necessary by war conditions) because they hope that it may prove the thin end of the wedge. For my part, I venture to hope the contrary. Food rations, paper regulation, clothing restrictions, and all the other minor annoyances of war-time will, I hope, make people ask how things would be if all our lives were under official control, as they must needs be if Socialists got the upper hand. It cannot be denied that the Defence of the Realm does make measures like Conscription unavoidable; but thus far should compulsion go and no farther. I am disposed, indeed, to say that school drill and training might render conscription unnecessary; but in this piece of optimism I may be wrong. The possible necessity of conscription must be faced, if we are not to drift again into the unpreparedness of 1914. We must never hereafter indulge in the fatuous security and maudlin benevolence of the period which began about 1870 and has lasted almost until now. We must resolutely recognise that "improving the condition of the people" is not and cannot be a function of the State; that public authority can do no more than remove obstacles to improvement, and cannot always do even that. We must also recognise that the People are not the wage-earning classes only, but include capitalists, landowners, professional workers, and even a certain number of persons who do not work at all, but live on unearned incomes. Those who talk of the People as if the word meant wage-earners and no others should be reminded of their Shakespeare. Menenius Agrippa in "Coriolanus" (Act I, Scene 1) recalls the fable of the Belly and the Members, which is at once the oldest and the most pointed illustration of this fundamental political truth.

I am, Sir, etc.,

EDWARD STANLEY ROBERTSON.

THE REFORM OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

The Hydro Hotel,
Torquay.

SIR,—May I, as a constant reader of the SATURDAY REVIEW, thank you heartily for your recent article on the above subject. I have wondered for some time

whether any of our journals would venture upon an outspoken protest against this attack—in the guise of reconstruction—upon the last remaining shred of the British Constitution, which the original Asquith Ministry set out to destroy.

Thank God the war overtook them before they had quite succeeded. But for the House of Lords where would this country be now?

Even shorn of half its power, and not vigorously led, it remains our one rock of defence against the oncoming tide of State Socialism, which—under cover of War Emergency Legislation—is being insidiously forced upon a nation temperamentally antagonistic to the petty tyranny of officialdom.

By a strange paradox—that might seem Gilbertian, were it not so dangerous—our devotees of democracy and of revolutionary Russia seem to be busily forging for our souls and bodies the very chains that hold the German nation in thrall.

The Kaiser may be a wicked "Imperialist" (presumably a wicked democrat does not exist!), but the fact remains that State Socialism, pushed to its logical conclusion, is the weapon with which he shepherds his docile people. For ourselves we are already burdened with a National Insurance Act "made in Germany," and it is worth re-reading Price Collier's "Germany and the Germans" to remind ourselves of the effect produced by this Act—and other legislation of the same order—on the character of that nation.

"We are drugging the people ourselves," he adds ruefully, "with legislation as a cure for the evils of industrialism . . . What a forlorn philosophy it is!" And again: "Over-legislation, whether by an autocrat or a democratic State, leads straight to revolution or to slavery. And, in Germany, the State, by giving much, has gained an appalling control over the minute details of human intercourse."

It is the Nemesis of docility, of which Germany and Russia are tragic examples. But we are not a docile race—

"Thank Him who isled us here and roughly set His Britain in blown seas and stormy showers."

We are submitting merely to much uncongenial restraint and official meddling because we are tremendously in earnest. But, when the war is over, we shall need to re-assert ourselves, and it is to the House of Lords we shall look to restore the balance and give us back our ancient moderate Constitutional Monarchy.

At all costs it must be saved from Democratic tinkering. If there is need for reform anywhere, it is in the House of Commons. One is tempted to add: "Oh, reform it altogether!" Perhaps the National Party may achieve that yet.

MAUD DIVER.

PRIVILEGED FASHIONS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Pall Mall, S.W.1.

SIR,—Dame Dora is evidently a lady of fashion. This morning we have the following announcement:—

"Promenade des toilettes and exhibition of Autumn Fashions by living models will be held to-morrow (Tuesday) and Wednesday. The Parade will take place from 3 to 4 and from 4.30 to 5.30 each afternoon, and no tickets of admission will be issued or required."

The Defence of the Realm Act was added to the Statute Book in November 1914, and with amending Acts is still the law of the land. Under these Acts, regulations and orders innumerable have been made, with the ultimate object that the full strength of the country shall be devoted to the prosecution of the war. In the spheres of architecture and engineering we are restricted to a minimum of expenditure on labour and materials, in every class of work, not only in the matter of new undertakings, but also in repairs and overhauls.

It is easy enough for our loyalty to understand that such restrictions are in the interest of our national

security, but it is not easy to understand why the exploitation of Fashions should be encouraged by the omission of any order that would make the above-quoted advertisement an equal offence against the Defence of the Realm. So long as such promenades are immune from the operations of the Acts, we need hardly trouble to do more than wonder whether those who organise them, and those who take part in them, remember that we have entered upon the fourth year of a war of which we cannot yet see the end.

We are, yours faithfully,

TWO ARCHITECTS.

SEPARATION AND DIVORCE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

45 Sudbourne Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

15 September 1917.

SIR,—Mr. A. Kipling Common strongly opposes what he calls any further relaxation of the marriage law. Of course, "Solicitor" has no right to speak in the name of the whole profession—nor did he do so—but I entirely agree with him that the smug hypocrisy of the opponents of divorce reform is amusing to solicitors—at any rate, to those who have had wide practical experience in divorce work.

The suggestion by Mr. Common that, if people are to be permitted to have a divorce simply by adopting the expedient of separating for a few years, we may as well do away with marriage altogether, is a ridiculous remark. People who would resort to such a device would easily obtain a divorce by collusion, which is an extremely rare thing to happen.

The point about marriage is that it is a civil contract, and should be determinable as such. Mr. Common says he would like to know what is to prevent a dozen connections of this sort in the course of a lifetime. He does not want to know anything of the kind, because he knows that such a thing would never happen. That is a case of a *reductio ad absurdum* and not an argument. But that is not the point at all; the point is that it is a monstrous thing for people to be bound as they are at present, without relief or remedy, except in really desperate cases.

He says the point to be considered is not the unhappiness of a few individuals. That is a childish remark to make in the face of 7,000 separations a year being made, apart from private arrangements. The points to be considered are the promotion of morality, the increase of the legitimate birth-rate, and the checking of disease. Mr. Common remembers, no doubt, the legal maxim that we learnt in our student days that it is to the interest of the State that litigation shall cease. It is to the interest of the State that the matters to which I have just referred shall cease.

The whole tenour of Mr. Common's letter shows that he has an amazingly small experience of the subject about which he professes to know a great deal, although he was admitted a solicitor when I was only a few years of age—I am not practising now.

This is one of the types of opponents that should be dealt with firmly—the old gentlemen who drag in a remark about marriage being the safeguard of the home, and about morality with an incidental reference to religion—all of which is pure clap-trap.

It will not do, sir, at this stage. Those of us who have worked on divorce reform are determined at last to see the fruits of our labours. We have known the need of reform for a long time through practical knowledge and experience, and we know that the very future of the race depends upon the reform we are advocating.

Any comment upon the concluding paragraph of Mr. Common's letter would spoil it, except that if he is satisfied with the parallel it would be cruel to disturb him—because it does not matter twopence.

Your obedient servant, A. E. BALE.

[Mr. Bale also sends us some amendments in detail which he has submitted to the Parliamentary Committee to which the Matrimonial Causes Act, 1917, Proposed Bill has been referred.]

REVIEWS.

SOME RUSSIAN YESTERDAYS.

The Diary of a Russian Lady. Reminiscences of Barbara Doukhovskoy (née Princesse Galitzine). With two Portraits. Long. 12s. 6d. net.

Russia as I Know It. By Harry de Windt. With numerous Illustrations. Chapman and Hall. 10s. 6d. net.

Through Russia in War Time. With 55 Illustrations and a Route Map. By C. Fillingham Coxwell. Fisher Unwin. 12s. 6d. net.

TAKE, as main ingredients, equal portions of good health, good spirits, endurance and audacity; add some compelling motive, as curiosity, restlessness, love of fame, devotion; throw in a fountain-pen, camera, and foilsap *ad libitum*; season with sentiment or cynicism, according to taste; and serve up hot between ornamental boards. Result, a book of travel; a book that shall earn money for the contracting parties, that (with luck) shall cross the seas, and shall make its author the favourite of the circulating libraries—for a month, or longer.

Of Mme. Doukhovskoy we may speak freely, because she has set us the example. She was, by her own statement, from her days of short frocks (then worn by children only), an enterprising and relentless flirt. She was impulsive, passionate, capricious, given to making scenes, a handful to her parents. She had, perhaps, in an exaggerated degree, the characteristics distinctive of girls of her rank in Russia. She was also a lover of music and, spasmodically, a reader. She acquired English as a "second native tongue," and writes it fluently, if with an addiction to a few such outworn flowers of speech as "swells" and "chaps." Having reduced a legion of adorers to despair, herself unscathed, she met her fate in General Serge Doukhovskoy, a serious soldier, a man marked for promotion, and nearly a score of years her senior. She now learnt that she had a heart, and that hearts can ache. All ended well, however. She married her "Sergg," and made him a devoted if somewhat trying wife; though unable, from long habit, quite to disguise her appreciation of the admiring looks and words she often evoked from other members of what she is fond of calling "the unfair sex."

Already a traveller by inclination, she soon became one by devotion. For it was "Sergy's" lot to follow the drum to the uttermost parts of the earth, and she, refusing to be left lamenting, followed "Sergy." She queued it at Erzeroum and at the capitals of Eastern Siberia and of Turkestan, where he was successively Governor-General. At Erzeroum, immediately after the close of the Russo-Turkish War, life was full of interest and variety. The long chapter devoted to it is one of the best in the book. But in the splendid exile of Siberia and Tashkend she was never long contented; she pined constantly for "darling St. Petersburg." She was therefore continually rushing to and fro over the surface of the globe; but her diary of events and journeys in the wilds is far more engrossing than when she writes of the ordinary pleasures and amusements of Paris and Petrograd, which she loved so dearly. Thus the description of her journey by wagon and pony-back from Kars to Erzeroum, with deep snow on the ground, and war only just over, undertaken to join her husband, though against his wish, is really moving. The perils were great and the privations severe. No wonder Erzeroum hailed her as a heroine of romance.

In Siberia, it must be admitted, there was a good deal in her surroundings that was depressing. At Khabarosko her servants were all convicts. "The head-gardener," we read, "who was sent to the galleys for having drowned his sweetheart, lives here with our laundress, who poisoned her husband—a pretty

couple indeed!" The piano had to be tuned by an amateur, an officer, who presented his fee to the Benevolence Society; and "it is true that in his tuning there is more benevolence than skill." Yet there were precious instances of humour. When General Doukhovskoy visited the chief town of Kamtchatka and the authorities were presented to him, they begged him to tell them what day of the month it was, as they had somehow lost count. Life in Turkestan was more strenuous and vivid. There the Governor-General was faced with problems resembling those with which our own administrators in India have had to deal. We fancy that there is amongst us a fairly opaque ignorance of Turkestan and what goes on there, which makes any light thrown upon it from within of special value. Also the story of the two Eastern potentates who, encountering mustard for the first time, took it for a separate dish, and each swallowed a spoonful of it, should on no account be missed.

Mr. de Windt, a traveller of admitted eminence, is also a practised writer, and aware of the meaning and value of selection. His book is no globe-trotter's journal, but a considered view of the various facets of Russian life. In the course of several journeys and sojourns in Russia he has made many acquaintances, observed much, and reflected much. Now, out of a full mind, he sets down a summary of his impressions and observations. He is no romantic pilgrim like Mr. Stephen Graham, who has tramped all over Russia, shared the life of the peasants, and acquired an almost uncanny insight into their minds. He is a level-headed man of the world, whose qualities form a complement to Mr. Graham's idealism, but at the same time he is quick to appreciate fine elements of character, wherever found. English readers could hardly wish for better exponents of pre-revolutionary Russia than this brace of writers. The moujik, in Mr. de Windt's opinion, has made wonderful progress since the Emancipation, a result due in part to legislation, but also to his innate capacity for improvement. The Cossack, too, gets ample recognition and explanation in these pages, and the insidious methods of Teutonic penetration are unveiled. At almost every Siberian post-house Mr. de Windt found cheap coloured prints, distributed by the German Government, of a kind intended to excite animosity and ridicule against England. "All were connected with the Boer War. British troops were invariably depicted in the act of ignominious flight, one work of art representing three British generals on their knees imploring mercy of Mr. Kruger!" In the frozen solitudes of the north Mr. de Windt encountered various political exiles. Nothing could be much more terrible than existence in these wilds. They assured him, however, that they "had little to complain of except, of course, utter stagnation, severe climatic conditions, and a chronic insufficiency of food." What a world of tragedy in that "except"!

Mr. Coxwell is almost a Pickwickian tourist—so simple-minded, so easily pleased, so little subjective in his observations, that he might seem to have just set out from Goswell Street. But there the resemblance ends. Adventures crowded on Mr. Pickwick at every turn, but not one befell Mr. Coxwell. Wrangles over passports and baggage were his nearest approach to anything exciting. Never was such an uneventful traveller. He was not even run away with by his post-horses. Perhaps he was over cautious. At any rate, though traversing Russia in war-time, he made a point of avoiding the war as a topic of conversation. Besides, his knowledge of Russian was so slight that his talk with those he met was limited to the exchange of bare civilities. The acceptance of a melon by a Khirghiz, recorded with some importance, does not tell us much about Khirghiz character. Mr. Coxwell also employs a style generally contorted and often grandiloquent. In "the sacred edifice" we encounter an old friend; the setting sun is "the departing monarch"; and a fashionable lady is "a proudly stepping, elegantly booted maiden." Mr. Coxwell is hap-

pier, however, with his camera than with his pen, and his illustrations must be regarded as his contribution to the bunch of traveller's joy offered us by our trio of explorers.

But what about the Russian Revolution? The Russian lady is silent. The Englishmen, on whom it came before their books were finished, put as good a face on it as may be; Mr. de Windt, in particular, giving Tsardom a decent and regretful burial. But neither of them betrays the slightest prescience of its tragic sequel—the refusal of Russian troops to fight the common enemy. Mr. de Windt is premature in holding that Germanism has been expelled from Russia. What else but Germanism is at the root of the soldiers' defection? One would like to know how these matters are viewed at the outposts of the Empire; what men are saying and thinking about them on the banks of Siberian Amur and in "silken Samarkand"; and whether in far Kamchatka the authorities are still concerned only with controversies about the calendar!

A DOG STORY.

Jerry of the Islands. By Jack London. Mills & Boon. 6s.

This is a dog story, the kind of thing that the late author always did rather well. He had a real insight into dog nature, and here he gives us some pleasant canine psychology, as when Jerry, a smooth-coated, golden-sorrel Irish terrier, takes a crocodile for a log awash, but an odd sort of log that is alive. To a dog, as Bacon said long before Mr. London, man is a god, and Jerry found himself obliged, in the course of his adventurous career, to indulge in polytheism, and black gods as well as white. His experiences among the head-hunting cannibals of the Solomon Isles are too horrible to be pleasing. Blackbirding, in which natives are only kept in check by the aid of that superior and mysterious god, dynamite, is bad enough, but the author revels in disgusting tortures even applied to scolding women. It is part, perhaps, of the delight in physical prowess, which is a main feature of his work. Still, the dog is wonderfully clever, and learns something from each of his masters. The first one lost his blackbirding ship and his own life through the wiles of a native chief, and Jerry became the only white soul in a savage settlement.

The book is effectively written in a way, yet tediously full of the traders' variety of pigeon-English called *bêche de mer*, which serves as a medium between white man and black. The home-staying white of this country will find it not easy to understand. If he knows what the Americanism "getting your goat" means, he may well be delayed by such a sentence as: "My word, what name you make 'm boy belong me stop along you too much."

The author is careful to explain that his picture of savagery in the Solomon Isles is not overdrawn.

"My goodness! I sailed in the teak-built ketch, the *Minota*, on a blackbirding cruise to Malaita, and I took my wife along. The hatchet-marks were still raw on the door of our tiny stateroom advertising an event of a few months before. The event was the taking of Captain Mackenzie's head, Captain Mackenzie at that time being master of the *Minota*."

Perhaps punitive expeditions by this time have eradicated these horrors of head-hunting. It is so, we believe, in Borneo, and ought to be so in the Solomon Isles. Mr. London, though his books dwell on one strain too much, was an author of much talent whose loss is to be regretted. An able seaman at seventeen, he lived to try many trades, and even to take a vivid interest in sociology.

Youth: a Narrative, and two other Stories. By Joseph Conrad. Dent. 5s. net.

Published originally in 1902, the three stories here reprinted with the author's note concerning them are some of the finest of his work. All of them are records of experience more or less, wonderful feats of memory in their detail alone. For sheer atmosphere and sinister detail we know nothing more impressive than 'Heart of Darkness.' 'Youth' shows that wonderful spirit of welcoming disaster and rushing life, as it was bound to be immortal, into the hardest trials which Goethe has well expressed in the couplet:

"Youth is royal, youth divine,
Youth is drunkenness without wine."

Before Captain Whalley comes 'To the End of the Tether,' his noble, self-sacrificing figure has made an impression on us like that of the poor old father in 'Le Père Goriot.' It is strange that such stories and 'The Nigger of the Narcissus' should not have put the author into a secure position as a man of letters. Yet the world does not consist for the most part of the discerning, and it was initiated by the lack of incident clearly explained. What actually did Mr. Kurtz do in his wilderness of black men far up the great river? Why could we not know earlier what was the matter with Captain Whalley? These are the questions which spring even now from the lips of the average reader.

THE CITY.

AT the close of a powerful letter on the Bank of England in our last week's issue, Mr. W. R. Lawson, the well-known financial writer, uses these words. "What not only the Bank of England but our whole banking system needs is more daylight both from within and without." We quite agree; but would draw our readers' attention to the half-yearly meeting of the Bank of England held on the 21st instant. "Presiding yesterday at the half-yearly general court of the Bank of England, Lord Cunliffe (the Governor) stated that the profits of the half-year ended the 31st ult., after making provision for all contingencies, had been £541,938, making the amount of "rest" on that day £3,567,462. After providing for a dividend of 5 per cent., less income-tax, the "rest" would be £3,021,724." Such is the *Times* report, and, presumably, if the Governor of the greatest bank in the world had condescended to say anything more it would have been reported. There is certainly not much "daylight" here, at all events from within. What is "the rest," anyway? Is it the Bank of England term for "balance" or "Carry-forward"? And why this austere mystery about the doings of the Bank, which has shareholders like other banks? The Bank of England shareholders must be singularly meek and confiding if they allow a 5 per cent. dividend to be thrown at them, like a bone to a dog, without a word of explanation or narrative.

Our esteemed contemporary, *Truth*, informed us in its "Mammon" article that the War Office has made a contract with Wet Carbonising, Limited, by which the Government is to lend this company money to build a factory in France, and to buy its briquettes at an agreed price. As the security for this advance of public money is presumably the capital and assets of Wet Carbonising, Limited, there ought to be a question asked about this transaction. There are at least a dozen patents for the making of fuel and the extraction of bye-products from peat. Who advised the War Office that this particular patent was the best? Was there any comparative examination by War Office experts of these various patents? The mere fact that Mr. Gerald Balfour is the Chairman of Wet Carbonising, and that Mr. Arthur Balfour is the largest shareholder, ought to make the Government officials particularly careful in their dealings with it. With regard to Government contractors and the vacation of seats, we believe that shareholders in companies are exempted from the Standing Order.

Before this issue appears, the new Government loan prospectus should be out, and its terms then known. Last Saturday's closure of the 5 per cent. Exchequer bonds list was not unexpected. They had not been really popular. Their shadow of popularity was waning. Yet it was necessary to devise some form of makeshift borrowing. For, as the Exchequer bonds did not appeal, the short-term borrowings were expanding the Treasury bills to an unpleasant degree, and we were on a level with Mr. McKenna's bad period of a year ago. To follow his example and issue 6 per cent. Exchequer bonds meant depreciation of credit, for sentiment is strong. Yet even "6 per cent." is not so terrible.

The truth is that, owing to income tax, we are much at a disadvantage in Government finance. The Imperial German Government has continued to borrow on much the same terms throughout, and has made popular appeals. Actually, we have done far better, but the results have been obscured. A 5 per cent. issue, liable to income tax, means $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to the fairly well-to-do investor at the most. It means less than 5 per cent. to all investors, save the very smallest.

Germany, and most other countries, do not handicap, and have not handicapped, themselves by this liability to income tax. The position is that we appear to have done far worse than we have really done, and our terms wrongly seem to have been progressively disadvantageous. Oddly enough, the last issue of our own "not subject to tax" loan met with a very poor response, although it seems to have been wanted since. But it was the true measure of our credit, and thus vastly better than that of Germany. However, the Treasury gave not a solitary "ha'penny" away in the terms, and thus could not well expect a much better result.

Bankers and stockbrokers alike are interested in the new Government borrowings. There will be a bid for market money, and an appeal to the investor, which may be afforded by a bonus on redemption to add to the attractions of the terms of issue. There is a rumour current to the effect that Mr. Bonar Law has brought pressure on the banks to reduce their deposit rates, and that the banks are resisting. There are vast sums on deposit in the manufacturing areas, and all other districts where money has been made.

That money is not coming to the Stock Exchange. Why should it, when the depositors are getting a good rate? They are prepared to wait and see things through, and are in a bargain-hunting mood. Moreover, if they are traders or manufacturers, they see great needs and activities after the war, and they want to keep on the safe side and have money at hand. These deposits are employed in Treasury bills by the banks, no doubt, to a large extent. But they are not being used for longer-dated maturities. And even if the money were utilised for the new Exchequer bonds, it would, for the reasons noted, make very little difference to the Stock Exchange.

Frankly, we do not think that the new issue will have any adverse effect upon the stock markets. The general public subscriptions, outside the groups in the manufacturing and trading areas indicated above, will not be big subscribers. Can Mr. Bonar Law attract those depositors, or the bankers themselves? Perhaps the bankers would say that, in these times, they would prefer to keep assets even more liquid.

Naturally, Mr. Bonar Law would like to get at the deposits. There is no reason why he should not. But so long as the bankers' deposit rates are so high, it is difficult to see that he will score a huge success with the new issue, although it will be very useful as a daily adjunct to a first-class and safe lock-up, keeping capital intact, and should bring much grist to the mill, deferring the War Loan itself to a later date. But we can find no confirmation of the persistent Lombard Street rumour that Mr. Bonar Law has brought concerted pressure to bear on the banking groups, natural though the policy might be. So, if nothing is done, it is

upon the terms themselves that the Chancellor must rely. And we hope that the patriotism of the classes who have made money easily during this war period will be equal to heavy subscriptions.

NEW BOOKS.

- A Book of Jewish Thoughts for Jewish Soldiers and Sailors (Chief Rabbi). Eyre and Spottiswoode.
 A Dictionary of London (Henry A. Harben). Jenkins.
 A Junior French Course, 1st Year (E. J. A. Groves). Blackie. 2s. 6d. net.
 A Skeleton Spanish Grammar (E. Allinson Peers). Blackie. 2s. 6d. net.
 An Analytical Outline of English History (W. E. Haigh). Milford. 3s. 6d. net.
 Black and White Magic (E. H. M. W., and W. Blair). Blackwell, Oxford. 3s. 6d. net.
 Cinema Plays: How to Write them; How to Sell them (Eustace H. Ball). Stanley Paul. 3s. 6d. net.
 Early Illustrated Books (Alfred W. Pollard). Kegan Paul. 3s. 6d. net.
 Generals of the British Army (Francis Dod). Country Life. 5s.
 Getting a Start: Aids to Success (N. C. Fowler and C. E. Whitehouse). Richards. 3s. 6d. net.
 History of the Abbey St. Alban (L. F. Rushbrook Williams). Longman. 7s. 6d. net.
 Human Temperaments (Charles Mercier). Scientific Press. 1s. 3d. net.
 L'Angleterre, le Canada et le Grande Guerre (par le Lieut.-Col. L. G. Desiardins). Street and Co.
 Letters to Mr. Britling: A Reply to Mr. H. G. Wells (Rev. F. W. Worsley). R. Scott. 2s. net.
 Modern Water-colour (Romilly Fedden). Murray. 6s. net.
 Music and Religion (Rev. W. W. Longford). Kegan Paul. 1s. 6d. net.
 New Lights on the Old Paths (Wm. Pascoe Goard). Marshall Bros. 6s.
 Nothing of Importance (Bernard Adams). Methuen. 6s. net.
 Peace Problems in Economics and Finance (Uriel D'Acosta). Routledge. 2s. 6d. net.
 Précis Writing for Beginners (Guy N. Pocock). Blackie. 2s.
 Rumania's Cause and Ideals (Leonard A. Magnus). Routledge. 3s. 6d. net.
 Shakespeare: His Music and Song (A. H. M. Sime). Kegan Paul. 1s. 6d. net.
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ANOTHER RECORD YEAR'S TRADING.

DEVELOPMENTS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE.

THE ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of Boots Cash Chemists (Eastern), Ltd., was held on the 24th inst., at the Midland Grand Hotel, St. Pancras. Sir Jesse Boot, Bart., J.P. (Chairman and Managing Director), presided and said:—

"I am glad to be able to congratulate our shareholders on the results of the year's trading. The business is being steadily strengthened. We have this year added some thousands of pounds to the reserve and contingency funds, and the amount carried forward has been increased from £17,372 to £19,279. We are trying—as far as it is possible by the exercise of business foresight—to secure for our shareholders a steady and desirable dividend, free from fluctuation. This is our main object also in respect of all our Associated Companies, which are equally interested in the observations which I am about to offer. For as I have said at previous meetings, a very large proportion of our shareholders are even more interested in the other Companies than they are in the Eastern, where no fresh issue of capital has been required for many years, while the others cover far larger areas and therefore have needed more capital to meet expanding trade.

"I now pass to a topic of what may fairly be called national interest. Two years ago I mentioned that the parent Company was beginning the manufacture of a number of fine chemicals which, before the war, were made only in Germany. To accommodate these undertakings and their accessory Research Laboratories, we have had to erect extensive new buildings, and we have put down plant and apparatus for this purpose alone of a value of no less than £200,000. I believe that the outlay will be fully justified by results. I consider that in this range of our undertakings we are rendering an important national service in a two-fold direction. For not only are we building up a great and essential national industry, but we are also helping very materially to bring prices down to a more reasonable level than that to which they were soaring. We have supplied very many tons of Aspirin to the Allied Governments at continuously reduced prices. Atropine is another fine chemical which at present is exceedingly scarce, but of which we have made a large quantity. These are but examples of a number of the synthetic drugs we have been engaged on.

"There is just one other subject to which I wish to allude. As you are doubtless aware, the British Fire Prevention Committee is a powerful body of technical experts, which meets from time to time to investigate the best appliances for the prevention of fire and the best means of fighting fire and securing the protection and safety of firemen, and it has paid particular attention to a new treatment for burns, the formula for which had been published in the *British Medical Journal*. Desiring to secure a standard and uniform article, they have, therefore, contracted with us to prepare a standardised product under the name of 'Burnol,' a special compound of antiseptics and paraffin, which is really a marvellous treatment for burns. We think so highly of it that we have set apart for its manufacture a floor space of 4,000 square feet in one of our new buildings. The reports of the efficiency of Burnol made by the medical men who have tested it are remarkably eulogistic, and already we are receiving enquiries with respect to it from all parts of the world.

"I come now to the vacancy on the Board of Directors caused by the death of my friend Sir James Duckworth, which has since remained unfilled, and the proposal which I am about to make will mark a new departure in the history of the Company. It is that the new director should be a lady. That, of course, is quite in sympathy with the general tendency of the time. Lady Boot has a long business experience which few women of the time can claim to equal, and it is no secret to those who have any inside knowledge of this Company's affairs that to her belongs the credit of having largely assisted me in bringing our shops up to their high standard of artistic excellence in the matter of their fittings and adornment. But that is only one of the reasons why I propose that Lady Boot should take the vacant place on the Board of the Company. The other is of even greater weight. It is that, as the staff of the Company becomes more and more recruited from women, there should be a woman member of the Board who has special sympathy with, and knowledge of, their wants and feelings; and I consider that in this respect especially it would be a most useful thing to bring her upon the Board, so that her wise and beneficent influence may be exercised directly in the future as it has been exercised indirectly for so many years past."

Lady Boot having been duly elected to a seat on the Board the meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

"The most exciting news"

A Prisoner on our lists, writing from one of the internment camps in Germany, says: "The most exciting news is the receipt of parcels," and continues: "It is a very important event; you cannot imagine what they mean to us here."

With the knowledge that the food supplied by the German authorities to the British Prisoners is, besides being **always unpalatable**, totally insufficient for their sustenance, one will readily appreciate what the regular supply of food parcels means to our countrymen who are prisoners in the enemy countries. The

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has under its care over 1000 prisoners, amongst whom are included a large percentage of the men of the original Expeditionary Force captured during the historic Retreat from Mons. They have had to endure the grossest indignities and hardships during their three years of captivity, and have only been kept from actual starvation by the parcels received from this country. Under present arrangements three food parcels are despatched to each man every fortnight, which are supplemented by bread, clothing, and necessary comforts. These parcels are regularly and gratefully acknowledged by the prisoners; and 10/6 only fail to reach their destination. The constant rise in the price of all commodities and packing materials (the actual packing is done by a voluntary staff) has greatly increased our weekly expenditure. We therefore

appeal for further funds

to enable us to maintain a constant flow of parcels. PLEASE HELP.

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